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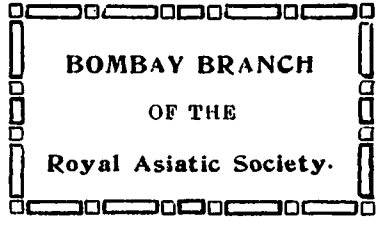

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EAST INDIA (CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS)

Indian Franchise Committee

Volume I

REPORT

of the

Indian Franchise Committee

1932

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Presented by the Secretary of State for India
to Parliament by Command of His Majesty
May, 1932.

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NOTE.

The main Census figures of 1931 quoted in this Report are :—

	Area. (*Sq. miles.*)	*Population.*
India (including Burma) ..	1,808,668	352,837,778
British India (including Burma)	1,096,160	271,526,933
India (excluding Burma) ..	1,575,176	338,170,632
British India (excluding Burma)	862,668	256,859,787
Burma	233,492	14,667,146

Burma is always excluded in our calculations save where the contrary is stated.

Many of the supplementary Census tables which we have used are still provisional and liable to alteration. We have been furnished with advance copies through the courtesy of the Census Commissioner, whose assistance to us throughout has been of the utmost value.

ALL-INDIA STATISTICS.*

	Male.	*Female.*	*Total.*
Total population	131,362,751	123,592,722	254,955,473
Adults (20 years of age and over)	67,699,963	63,249,962	130,949,925
Ditto literate	9,991,628	1,101,947	11,093,575†
Ditto literate in English	1,616,481	140,116	1,756,597†
Hindus	90,107,387	86,017,155	176,124,542
Muslims	34,418,277	31,244,591	65,662,868
Indian Christians	1,684,003	1,637,742	3,321,745
Sikhs‡	1,729,868	1,376,786	3,106,654
Europeans	81,960	34,956	116,916
Anglo-Indians	50,663	47,918	98,581
Tribal	.. ..	.. ..	5,117,791
Others	.. ..	.. ..	1,406,376
Total urban population..	.. ..	.. ..	27,357,800
Total rural population ..	.. ..	.. ..	227,597,673

* For Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces, the Punjab, Bihar and Orissa, the Central Provinces, Assam and the North-West Frontier Province.

† These do not include the figures for Bombay, for which details are not available. The provisional figure for the total number of literates is, however, 1,407,394.

‡ In the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province only.

INDIAN FRANCHISE COMMITTEE REPORT.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER.

SIR,

We have the honour to submit the Report of the Indian Franchise Committee. The Committee, the appointment of which had been recommended by the Franchise Sub-Committee of the Indian Round Table Conference, was constituted under your instructions in December, 1931, within a few weeks of the adjournment of the second session of the Conference. Its terms of reference are contained in your letter to our Chairman of 29th December, 1931, which is printed as Appendix I to this Report. The members are as follows:—

The Most Honourable the Marquess of Lothian, C.H., Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for India, *Chairman.*
Sir John Kerr, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., *Deputy Chairman.*
Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, M.L.C.
Khan Bahadur Maulvi Aziz-ul-Huque, M.L.C.
Mr. R. R. Bakhale, M.L.C.
Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P.
Mr. R. A. Butler, M.P.
Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, M.L.C.
The Most Honourable the Marquess of Dufferin and Ava.
The Honourable Mr. E. Miller.
Major J. Milner, M.C., M.P.
Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliyar, M.L.A.
The Honourable Mary Pickford, C.B.E., M.P.
Mrs. P. Subbarayan.
Sardar Bahadur Sir Sundar Singh Majithia, Kt., C.I.E.
Mr. S. B. Tambe.
Sir Mohammad Yakub, Kt., M.L.A.
Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Kt., C.S.I., M.L.A.

The Committee's Tour.

2. The British members of the Committee left England for India on the 14th January, 1932, and arrived in Bombay on the 29th January. The Committee as a whole started its work on the 1st February at Delhi. In the three months which elapsed between that date and the signature of the Report, we visited every province in India, with the exception of the Central Provinces and Assam, and paid a second visit to the United Provinces, which, owing to the shortness of the

notice given, had been unable to complete its investigations of the problems referred to it on the occasion of our first visit. It was with very real regret that owing to considerations of time we found ourselves unable to visit the Central Provinces and Assam, but we had the advantage of full discussion with members of the Governments of both those provinces and with the provincial committees which had been constituted in them. The total mileage covered by the Committee in the course of its tours in India amounted to some 7,689 miles.

The importance of speed.

3. You had impressed upon us the importance of speed and this consideration has been constantly present to us in our endeavours to complete our first Report as early as possible. Indian opinion has been equally insistent that the preparation of the new constitution should not be delayed by avoidable deliberation in our own proceedings. Our enquiries have been necessarily compressed between the date when the British members reached Delhi and the onset of the hot weather. It has been our object to secure, in the relatively short time thus available to us, the greatest volume of evidence and the fullest possible appreciation of the trend of opinion, both official and non-official, on the important subjects referred for our consideration. It will not be out of place to indicate the procedure adopted by us with a view to attaining this end.

The Committee's Procedure.

Establishment of Provincial Committees.

4. Your letter of 29th December referred to the fact that the various provincial Governments had during the last twelve years " accumulated a store of experience of the working of the existing electoral machinery which should prove invaluable to " the Committee. You went on to say that " His Majesty's Government desire that this experience should be made available to you through provincial committees constituted in each province by the local Government which, while being composed in the main of non-official representatives, would each contain a member or members with official experience of these matters, and to which official records of each Government would be made available ". In accordance with this suggestion, provincial Governments at the earliest possible date set up in each province committees comprising, so far as possible, spokesmen of the various schools of thought and of the various political interests existing in each province. The committees in question were in the main composed of members of the provincial councils. They were to a large extent under the chairmanship of non-officials. They varied in number from 11 to 20, the average number being 15. A list showing their composition is printed as

Appendix II. We desire to take this opportunity to place on record our deep sense of indebtedness to the chairmen and members of these committees, who, at great inconvenience to themselves, and at short notice, devoted time and energy to the examination of witnesses, the compilation of information and the formulation of advice for the benefit of our Committee. We could not have adequately covered the field before us in the short time available but for their friendly and willing co-operation and without the assistance of the store of personal knowledge and mature judgment brought to bear by them on the problems referred to us for examination.

The Committee's Questionnaire.

5. With a view to concentrating discussion, so far as possible, steps were taken before the departure of the British members of the Committee from England to compile a questionnaire covering the field referred to us for consideration. Copies of this questionnaire (printed as Appendix III) were telegraphed to local Governments and provincial committees, and local Governments were asked to arrange that the fullest possible publicity should be given to it and that notices should be issued to the press indicating that statements of the views of individuals or associations on the questionnaire would be welcomed by our Committee. In addition, local Governments were subsequently requested to send copies of the questionnaire to influential and representative individuals and associations in their provinces. We intimated that the procedure contemplated by us was that local governments should formulate their own views on the points raised in our questionnaire and should be in a position to discuss them on our arrival, and that the provincial committees, to whom we should look as our authoritative advisers in combination with the local Governments, should independently formulate such provisional views as might be possible and should at their discretion conduct a preliminary examination of witnesses on the basis of their written statements. We can say with confidence that the results of this procedure exceeded our expectation. On our arrival in each province, we found available for us, in addition to the provisional recommendations of the local Governments and provincial committees, a mass of information which had been considered and tabulated by these bodies. In addition, we had placed at our disposal the statements of the witnesses submitted to the provincial committees and in some cases the record of their cross-examination by those committees. In this way our task was simplified, and we were able to traverse the field before us more rapidly than otherwise would have been the case, and to concentrate discussion on the points of special interest in each province. Our discussions with the provincial committees and the local Governments, and our examination of witnesses and of the written statements of those whom it was not possible to examine orally, resulted in every province in bringing to

light a number of points calling for further investigation. On leaving each province, therefore, we invited further consideration by the local Government and by the provincial committee of various questions, some of them of great importance, arising out of our joint deliberations. In every case we have received valuable supplementary reports from both local Governments and from the provincial committees. These are printed as appendices to our Report. This collaboration has been of the greatest value to us and it will be seen from a comparison of the original proposals submitted to us with these supplementary reports, how fruitful it has also been in developing and giving expression to the views both of Governments and committees.

Representative character of the field covered.

6. Our Report, therefore, represents far more than the work of our own members during the three months of their work. It represents also active consideration of franchise problems by provincial Governments and committees over a period almost as long, as in many cases they began their labours before the Franchise Committee itself assembled in Delhi. Except in the case of one important political party we can confidently claim that we have had the assistance of all shades of opinion in India, and in the case of that party we have been assisted by the fact that its views on the subject under our consideration were already to a large extent on public record and they were taken into account in our deliberations.

Witnesses and evidence.

7. Some estimate of the amount of material available to us may be formed from the fact that the Committee, during the three months of its stay in India, has examined either independently or in joint session with provincial committees 311 witnesses (Appendix IV), and has directly received 187 written statements from persons desirous of representing their views. In addition we have had before us the written statements submitted by members of the public to provincial committees and local Governments for transmission to us. The total number of witnesses examined by provincial committees amounts to 73, while no less than 1,120 written statements were received and transmitted to us by those committees. We feel, therefore, in submitting our recommendations in this report that we can claim that they are based on a full examination of the field with which it deals both by ourselves and by the Provincial Governments and committees.

Assistance given by local Governments.

8. We desire in concluding these introductory remarks to pay a special tribute to the willing and able co-operation of the local Governments in our enquiries, and to the value of the assistance

obtained from those Governments and their secretariats. Normally a committee engaged on work of this character would assemble in India early in November at the beginning of the cold weather, and would have five months in which to tour the country and collect the necessary information before the hot weather set in. In our case, however, we were unable to start work until the beginning of February, and were compelled to compress our tour and our enquiries into a little over two months. This unfortunate necessity placed local Governments under a grave disadvantage. Working, however, as they did under very high pressure, owing to the short notice given of the arrival of the Committee, the urgency and multiplicity of its written and telegraphic enquiries, the area of the field to be covered and the numerous and important points of detail which required investigation before a considered opinion could be expressed, they gave us assistance of inestimable value and proved themselves at all times the most willing and friendly of collaborators.

Evidence by members of the Central Legislature, by All-India associations and by the Government of India.

9. The bulk of our work lay on this occasion in the provinces. But we had the advantage of valuable evidence from members of the Council of State and of the Legislative Assembly on the occasion of our visits to Delhi ; and we took the same opportunity to ascertain the views on the matters under our consideration of representatives of a number of All-India associations. We further invited the Government of India (to the co-operation and assistance of whose officers with the work of our Committee we cannot pay too high a tribute) to express their views, either in writing or orally, on the points raised in our questionnaire. They however, while placing at our disposal the knowledge and experience of their secretariat, members of which gave evidence before us, decided not to meet our Committee as a Government. In arriving at this decision they were influenced not only by the consideration that the bulk of the information on the subjects under discussion was derived from the provinces and so had independently already been placed at our disposal, but by a number of other factors which might have made the preparation and publication at this stage of a statement of the views of the Government of India inexpedient. Inasmuch as the report of our Committee would in the ordinary course be subjected to their critical examination after publication, the balance of advantage was thought to rest with avoiding any commitment in advance.

Scope of our Report.

10. There is one other matter to which we must refer. You told us in your letter of the 29th December last that it was not our function to attempt a settlement of the communal problem, but

you added that it was clear that the question of communal electorates and the connected question of apportionment of seats in the legislature to the several communities must be settled before we could undertake the task of preparing a detailed scheme for the composition of the legislatures, and for the arrangement of the constituencies upon which they are to be based. You authorised us, however, to proceed, in so far as we might feel that the absence of such an assumption would preclude us from arriving at conclusions, on the assumption that separate communal electorates will continue to form a feature of the new constitution; and you invited us to consider in the light of the progress made during our tour whether an interim report would not serve to expedite the progress of the general enquiry of which our investigations form a part.

11. The communal question is still unsettled, and we have, as you anticipated, found it impossible to propose a detailed scheme for the composition of the legislatures, or for the apportionment of seats within them. In the case of the depressed classes we have collected a great deal of information regarding their definition and their numbers, and we have indicated, so far as we could ascertain it, the extent to which they are likely to secure representation in the legislatures under the franchise schemes which we propose. But pending a decision upon the main communal question, we have refrained from making any proposals as to the further representation, if any, which should be accorded to them, or as to the nature of such representation, and as it is impossible at this stage to fix the precise size of the various legislatures, we have similarly refrained from making detailed proposals as to the extent or nature of the representation which should be accorded to the minor minorities, Indian Christians, Europeans, and Anglo-Indians. We may, however, fairly claim that our report goes beyond the scope of the interim report which was contemplated in your letter of instructions. It contains a complete scheme for the basis of the franchise, proposals regarding the representation of women and labour, and a provisional allotment of seats for the special interests which we consider should receive special representation both in the provinces and in the Federal Assembly so far as it concerns British India. It will be a comparatively simple matter, once the communal question has been settled, to decide upon the size of the legislatures and the apportionment of seats within them and to delimit the constituencies. We have been unable in the time at our disposal to conduct a detailed investigation of the problem of the representation of the aboriginal tribes, but we have recommended that the local Governments concerned should go into the matter in greater detail, and have suggested the lines which their investigations might take.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.—INTRODUCTION.

The Prime Minister's letter.

12. The task set before the Indian Franchise Committee is defined in the Prime Minister's letter to the Chairman of 29th December, 1931. Its investigations are fundamentally governed by the statement of policy presented by His Majesty's Government to Parliament on 1st December, 1931 and approved by both Houses. That statement contained as its salient parts the following paragraphs :—

> " The view of His Majesty's Government is that responsibility for the government of India should be placed upon legislatures, central and provincial, with such provisions as may be necessary to guarantee, during a period of transition, the observance of certain obligations and to meet other special circumstances, and also with such guarantees as are required by minorities to protect their political liberties and rights.
>
> " In such statutory safeguards as may be made for meeting the needs of the transitional period, it will be a primary concern of His Majesty's Government to see that the reserved powers are so framed and exercised as not to prejudice the advance of India through the new constitution to full responsibility for her own government."

In his letter of instructions to the Franchise Committee, the Prime Minister observed :—" To your Committee His Majesty's Government will look for complete and detailed proposals on which to base the revision of the franchise, and the arrangement of constituencies for the new legislatures, central and provincial, which are to form part of the constitution envisaged in the statement to which I have referred." A few lines further on he added :—" The principle of a responsible federal Government, subject to certain reservations and safeguards, has been accepted by His Majesty's Government, while it has been decided that the Governors' provinces are to become responsibly governed units, enjoying the greatest possible measure of freedom from outside interference and dictation in carrying out their own policies in their own sphere. In these circumstances it is clearly necessary so to widen the electorate that the legislatures to which responsibility is to be entrusted should be representative of the general mass of the population, and that no important section of the community may lack the means of expressing its needs and its opinions."

Proposals of the Round Table Conference.

13. The Prime Minister further instructed the Committee to give full weight to the report of the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference. That report stated that " while it was generally held that adult suffrage was the goal which should ultimately be attained, it was agreed that the basis of the franchise could forthwith be broadened, and that a large increase was desirable." The majority recommended " the immediate increase of the electorate so as to enfranchise not less than ten per cent. of the population, and indeed a larger number,—but not more than 25 per cent. of the total population—if that should, on full investigation, be found practicable and desirable." The sub-Committee further recommended that in addition to providing for this increase, consideration should be given to the introduction of " a scheme by which all adults not entitled to a direct vote would be grouped together in primary groups of about 20 or in some other suitable manner, for the election of one representative member from each group, who would be entitled to vote in provincial elections either in the same constituencies as the directly qualified voters or in separate constituencies to be formed for them." The Prime Minister added that " His Majesty's Government attach special importance to the question of securing a more adequate enfranchisement of women than the existing system, which applies to women the same qualifications as to men, and has produced a women's electorate numbering less than one-twentieth of the total male electorate." He also desired the Committee to " consider by what methods the representation of labour can most effectively be secured." Finally, while stating that it was not the function of the Franchise Committee to attempt a settlement of the communal problem, he instructed the Committee to obtain information on a number of matters connected with the representation of the depressed classes, to which further reference will be made in the chapter of this report dealing with that question.

Implications of responsible government.

14. The main task of our Committee, therefore, is to frame a scheme for the franchise and the constituencies of the new legislatures, central and provincial, suitable for the system of responsible government defined in the statement of 1st December, 1931. Responsible government implies two distinct things. In the first place, it implies that the executive is formed from the legislature and is responsible to the legislature in the sense that it can only remain in office so long as it can command its support, and that at statutory intervals, or, if necessary, at more frequent intervals, the decision as to governmental policy, or as between rival parties, is referred to the electorate by means of a dissolution. If a system of responsible government is to work, the electoral system must be

such as is likely to produce legislatures, both provincial and federal, which will contain the elements required to form both stable ministries competent to conduct executive government in the conditions of modern India, and oppositions capable not only of criticism but of forming an alternative government. It is no less important that the electorate itself should be reasonably able to discharge the ultimate function of deciding the issues submitted to its judgment at a dissolution. Unless these conditions are fulfilled, the structure of government itself may be endangered, and if government goes, self-government and social and economic progress on democratic lines go with it.

15. In the second place, responsible government implies that the main driving force behind legislation and public administration is public opinion, making itself effective through the electorate and the members returned to the legislatures by the electorate. It is therefore essential, as the Prime Minister stated, that under a system of responsible government the electorate should be so widened that the legislatures can reasonably be said to be representative of the general mass of the population. It is equally essential that no important section of the community should be deprived of the opportunity of making its needs and opinions felt in the legislatures, because under all democratic systems it is the interests of those who are represented which tend to receive consideration, while the interests of those who are not represented are liable to be ignored, both at election time and afterwards. If indeed a system of responsible government is to work satisfactorily, it will only be because the people feel that the legislatures represent them, and because men and women of public spirit, anxious for social and political reforms, throw their energies whole-heartedly into those legislatures as the means of achieving their aims.

CHAPTER II.—THE QUESTION OF ADULT FRANCHISE.

16. The Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference considered that adult franchise was the goal that should ultimately be attained. A large number of people in India, both men and women, have expressed the view that adult franchise is immediately attainable and should be the foundation of the new constitution. Some of the leading advocates of this view have not appeared before us, but a number of witnesses have urged it upon us and individual members of the Committee have done their best to ascertain the reasons for the opinion of those who have not tendered evidence. Adult suffrage is now the basis of responsible government throughout the British Commonwealth of Nations and in most democracies, and there are undoubtedly many powerful arguments in its favour in India to-day.

Arguments for adult franchise.

17. The first is that adult suffrage is the only method by which absolute equality of political rights can be secured to every adult citizen. Any form of restricted franchise necessarily infringes the principle of equality between individuals in some degree. The second reason is that adult suffrage is the best means of securing that the legislatures represent the people as a whole. The third reason is that it solves, so far as the electoral roll is concerned, the difficult problem of securing the fair representation of all elements of the population, communal and racial, rich and poor, town and country, men and women, depressed classes, and labour. Whether adult franchise results in fair representation in the legislatures depends on the system of representation adopted, as the endless controversies, in the West no less than in India, about proportional representation, the second ballot, reservation of seats, and special or separate electorates, abundantly prove. The fourth reason in favour of adult franchise is that its adoption avoids the necessity for devising special franchises, for example for women, or the depressed classes, may discourage the formation of groups based on sectional, communal, or similar interests, and will facilitate the development of parties based on political ideas and ends, which are the true foundation of sound political life.

The Ceylon experiment.

18. We have realised fully the force of these considerations in favour of the immediate introduction of adult franchise. Before, therefore, attempting to arrive at any conclusions we obtained evidence about a form of adult franchise which has recently been embodied in the Ceylon constitution. The Government of Ceylon very kindly deputed Sir Bernard Bourdillon, K.B.E., C.M.G., the Chief Secretary, to meet us at Madras, where we discussed the

whole matter with him very fully. We desire to express our grateful appreciation of the value of the assistance, and of the very complete information which he laid before us. The Ceylon constitution does not provide for adult franchise as generally understood. The Government does not undertake the responsibility for registering the electors, but, in effect, any adult citizen of either sex permanently resident in Ceylon, may obtain the right to vote by applying to be placed on the register. The population of the island according to the 1931 census, was 5,312,548; the total number of voters on the register at the general election of 1931 was 1,577,932 (males 978,548, females 599,384, or 30 per cent. of the population); the total number of voters who went to the poll was 708,318 in 37 out of 50 single member electoral districts, i.e., 44·89 per cent. of the total electorate, or 57·96 per cent. of the electorate in the contested constituencies. The percentage of literacy among the population was 31 in 1911, 39·9 in 1921, and is estimated at nearly 50 today. (In 1921 it was 56·3 per cent. for men and 21·2 per cent. for women.) The method of polling is that known as the "coloured box" system, similar to that in use in several provinces in India, and does not contain any important features which are not in use in some parts of India today, though no province uses the system as a whole. The island is divided into nine districts; in three districts polling was completed in one day; in two it occupied two days; in two, three days; in one district it was spread over five days; and in one over six days. In all districts except one, women assistant presiding officers were appointed to help the women voters, and in four districts special arrangements were made for purdah women voters. The approximate number of registered electors allotted to each pair of polling clerks per day was 1,000, and one or two assistant presiding officers as the case might be were appointed to each station in addition. The Chief Secretary informed us that the large proportion of the adult population, some three-fifths of the whole, whose names appeared on the register, was due to the fact that candidates and their agents conducted campaigns to induce their supporters to register. He thought, however, that it would be preferable for the Government to register all adults on its own initiative, and it is obvious that government action is necessary in order to secure the systematic removal from the rolls of the names of those voters who have died, or become disqualified, or have left the district. Sir Bernard Bourdillon said that under the polling arrangements made, though the strain would be considerable, there would, in his view, be no insuperable administrative difficulty in Ceylon in polling an electorate comprising the whole of the adult population.

Simplification of polling methods.

19. In the light of the discussion with Sir Bernard Bourdillon and with administrative officials in each province of India who have been responsible for conducting polling operations, we have drawn

up a simplified polling system applicable to Indian conditions. We are convinced that many of the polling arrangements now in force in India are unduly elaborate, and that by simplifying them it would be possible to poll a far larger number of voters without any loss of accuracy or efficiency. The details of our scheme will be found in Appendix V. Briefly, our scheme provides—

(*a*) for the coloured box or " symbol " system, under which it is unnecessary for the voter whether literate or illiterate to make any mark on the ballot paper ; he has merely to place it in the box marked with the colour or " symbol " of the candidate of his choice. This system not only simplifies his task, but makes it possible for him to cast his vote in secret, while increasing the number of electors who can be polled within a given time ;

(*b*) for the issue of ballot papers, not by the presiding officer, but by polling clerks in groups of two under his general supervision ;

(*c*) for a simplification of the system of identification now in use, which seems unnecessarily rigorous.

Under this system, which we advise should be adopted in all the provinces, it should be possible to poll per polling station a number of voters approaching the number polled in Ceylon, subject only to the fact that more elaborate measures for polling women voters will probably be necessary in parts of India than are usual in Ceylon, where purdah obtains only to a limited extent.

20. Despite, however, the evidence from certain witnesses in India, and from Ceylon, and the fact that we are able to recommend a simplified procedure for polling, we have been driven to the conclusion that we must advise against the introduction of complete adult franchise in India to-day, partly for administrative and partly for more general reasons. We will deal with these in sequence.

Administrative arguments against adult franchise.

21. If an electoral system is to command the confidence of the people it must reflect accurately and honestly the votes as they are intended by the voters themselves. Nothing could be more injurious to the healthy working of responsible government, or more conducive to cynical indifference and irresponsibility among the people themselves, than a well-grounded suspicion that the elections were falsified by inefficiency or corruption in the electoral machinery itself. There are three reasons for considerable reserve in applying Ceylon experience to India. In the first place, the conditions in a small island containing less than six million people differ entirely from those of British India which, excluding Burma, contains 257 million people, where distances are immensely greater, and where communal and other differences are far more acute. In the second place, about

50 per cent. of the Ceylon population is literate, as compared with 8 per cent. in India, while only about 60 per cent. of the adults in Ceylon are, in practice, on the roll. In the third place, the number of administrative officers available to act as presiding officers is much larger in proportion to the population in Ceylon than it is in India.

The presiding officer.

22. We have, however, applied a more exact test than a comparison with Ceylon. The presiding officer is, in the main, the bottle neck of the polling system. He (or she) must be a person of sufficient authority and competence to manage the officials and control the agents of candidates, the voters, and if necessary the police in the polling station. He must be capable of understanding the law and practice relating to the conduct of elections sufficiently to enable him to decide any disputes that may arise. And, above all, he must be of such standing and reputation for integrity that he will be above suspicion of abusing his power in the interest of any candidate or party, and that candidates, their agents, and the general public will have confidence in his impartiality. The number of suitable persons available as presiding officers varies in every province and from district to district in every province. In the main Government officers above a certain grade and salary have been used hitherto, supplemented in greater or less degree by non-officials. Even with these restricted classes, complaints, allegations of malpractices, and the presentation of election petitions have been frequent. Such petitions may be expected to be more numerous in future, owing to the keener interest which is likely to be taken in future elections and the larger number of candidates. Presiding officers, therefore, of the necessary character and competence are essential.

Type of official available.

23. We have discussed with every provincial Government and provincial committee and with officials possessed of personal knowledge of election conditions, the qualifications necessary in presiding officers, and the classes of officers who could be made available for this purpose. Owing to the great variation in the number and size of districts and provinces, in methods of administration, and in the grades and pay of officers employed, we find it impossible to generalise as to the number of officials available either in each individual province, or in the country as a whole. The most satisfactory unit for the purpose of calculation is the self-contained district, and we have investigated selected average districts in some detail. In the district of Agra (United Provinces), for example, there are some 220 suitable officers who can be temporarily taken from their normal work and appointed as presiding officers. The list includes assistant magistrates and collectors, tahsildars, officers holding responsible

posts in the commissioner's, collector's and tahsil offices, civil court officers and superior officials, public works officers and superior officials, excise inspectors, officials from the agricultural, irrigation, chemical, co-operative, veterinary, registration, education, and industries departments, postmasters and telegraph masters, teachers in Government schools, income-tax officers, pensioners, officers of the Court of Wards offices and cantonment offices. It is not possible to use all the officers in these cadres, as executive staffs cannot be wholly denuded even on a public holiday declared for the purpose of making the largest possible number of officers available to conduct the elections, and a deduction must be made for officers who are ill, or on leave. Agra, however, is a district which contains an unusually large number of qualified officers. On the other hand, in the Amritsar district of the Punjab it is considered by Government officers having experience of the conduct of elections that, owing perhaps to communal feelings, the use of gazetted officers only as presiding officers is necessary. Allowing for such officers of the post office, police, medical and prison services as cannot be relieved of their normal duties, for absences due to leave or illness, and for officers necessarily retained for duty in other departments, the number available in the district is only 30, enabling, with appropriate polling clerks, police, etc., only 30 stations to be fully staffed.

The use of non-officials.

24. We have considered very carefully the question of the extent to which non-officials can be used as presiding officers. That both men and women can be used is certain, but the limitations are two-fold. The first is that while a number may be available in towns, there are many rural districts in which hardly any assistance of this kind would be forthcoming. The second is that many otherwise suitable persons are actively engaged in politics and that objections are frequently raised against non-official presiding and other polling officers owing to political, religious, caste or other reasons

Numbers of voters per polling station.

25. The basic figure for the purpose of calculation is that one presiding officer, assisted by two clerks—one to check the name of the voter on the roll of registered electors and the other to issue the ballot paper—can deal with a maximum of 1,000 registered electors per day. In arriving at this estimate, we have allowed for the fact that, on the one hand, electors do not arrive at regular intervals during the day and therefore that polling stations do not poll to their maximum capacity, and, on the other, that only a percentage of the electors actually go to the poll. The maximum number of polling clerks who can be effectively supervised by a single presiding officer in thickly populated areas may be taken at eight, though

where there are more than four clerks one or more assistant presiding officers would probably also be necessary. But eight clerks in a single polling station cannot deal with four times as many voters as can two clerks. Definite sections of the electoral roll have to be allotted to each table. The speed becomes less the larger the number of voters, men and women, who have to be directed or to find their way to the right table, and have thereafter to enter the voting compartment containing the coloured boxes separately and in turn. Except in the large towns, there are few buildings in which large numbers, such as it would be necessary to provide for under adult suffrage, can be conveniently dealt with. Opinions differ as to the maximum number which can be dealt with by an eight-clerk polling station. It certainly will not at a maximum exceed 2,500, and other authorities reduce it to 1,800, or indeed to considerably less, where there are many women voters, and when Assembly elections are taking place at the same time as Council elections.

26. In the great majority of cases, however, it is impossible to make an arithmetical calculation on the basis of each polling station having a staff consisting of a presiding officer and eight clerks. Polling stations are usually provided within six to eight miles of every village, and in thinly populated districts the number of voters per polling station may fall far below the maximum it could deal with. Yet each such polling station requires one presiding officer. Again, the number of presiding officers available varies enormously from district to district. In some, and in most towns, enough can be found to poll a large electorate in a single day. In others with an equal population, it may be necessary to move them from station to station for two or more days.

The problem of police.

27. There are also other limiting factors. The most important perhaps is that of police. Elections in present circumstances occasionally result in great excitement, the polling booths and the approaches thereto become congested, the buildings available are often small and ill-suited for the crowd of voters, agents and sight-seers who assemble and trespass into and about the booths unless sufficient police are available. The provision of sufficient police becomes the more essential in proportion as the number of electors per polling station increases. In the Agra district it was doubted whether 400 police could be made available for election purposes in rural areas. As a rule, one subordinate officer and four constables are necessary for each polling station. The total number of sub-inspectors, sergeants and head constables in the nine provinces is just over 30,000 and of constables about 133,500. Large polling stations will require more than one officer. Making allowance for this and for illness, leave and the need for leaving a certain number

free for other urgent work, and assuming that, as stated above, each polling station can deal with 1,000 registered electors per day, we arrive at a figure of about 25,000,000 electors as the maximum who can be dealt with per day so far as the police are concerned.

The women voters.

28. Then there is the question of polling the women voters. In almost all the provinces the necessity of making special arrangements for women voters has been urged upon us as essential if any considerable numbers are to come to the poll. Opinion varies from those who insist that at least in the towns it is necessary to have purdah polling booths entirely staffed by women presiding officers and women polling clerks, to those who consider that all that is necessary is that there should be separate entrances and exits for women, and that in every polling station there should be a woman assistant to help the women voters. This problem is discussed in detail in Chapter VIII dealing with women's franchise. It is mentioned here to show how greatly the problem of adult suffrage would be complicated by the necessity for meeting needs created by the purdah system. It would be quite impossible to provide the necessary female staff to poll the whole female population on either of these systems at the present time.

The extension of the polling period.

29. It is sometimes urged that it would be possible to poll the whole adult population by extending the number of days or weeks during which polling takes place. It is true that by extending the time in each constituency, and by moving the staff from constituency to constituency within the same district, the number of voters who can be dealt with by the electoral machinery can be almost indefinitely increased. Both opinion and practice vary from province to province in this matter. But there are obvious limits to the possibility of extending the time allotted to polling. The usual practice is to proclaim the polling day a public holiday, and to close down practically all official activities, save those of the police, the medical service, and the post office, in order to enable officials to be used for polling purposes. In many districts it takes a day for these officials to reach, and another day to return from, the polling stations to which they are allotted. One polling day thus means at least three days absence from their ordinary work for many of the election officials concerned. At present in most provinces the poll extends over at least two days, because separate days are allotted to Hindus and to Muslims. It is estimated that in some provinces it will take two or three days to poll 10 to 15 per cent. of the population, and that in others it will take longer. It would clearly take very much longer still to poll all the adults, both men and women. The suspension of non-urgent public activities for three or four days once in three

or four years for election purposes is not a serious matter, but the election period could not be prolonged far beyond these limits without considerable hardship and expense to the public who have business in the courts and in the administrative offices. Further, the evidence goes to show that the longer the duration of the polling, the more does it lead to attempts on the part of candidates or their agents and supporters, to influence voters by bringing intensive local pressure of one kind or another to bear. The general experience in all countries is that it is desirable, if possible, to complete all polling in a single day.

30. There is also the complication that it is the present practice to hold elections both for the provincial councils and for the Legislative Assembly on the same days. This arrangement has been devised partly to meet the convenience of voters who often have to travel considerable distances to the poll, and partly to avoid a double stoppage of ordinary administrative activity. It also suits candidates and political parties. But if there were to be adult franchise both for the provincial and for the federal legislatures, it would be necessary either to have a polling machinery which could deal at the same time with about 130 million electors, each entitled to cast votes for two different constituencies and candidates, or to duplicate the whole process at different times.

The present limit of administrative feasibility.

31. In the final report submitted to us by the Government of the United Provinces, a detailed examination of the whole problem is made. It reaches the conclusion that both from the point of view of presiding officers and police, the maximum number of registered voters who can be polled in one day is 7,200,000, and in two days, 10,800,000 out of a total population of 48,408,000 in the province. It may be said, and with some truth, that all these figures are only approximate. They may, however, be reinforced by another calculation. Adding together the total number of officials who in the opinion of the various provincial Governments could be used as presiding officers we obtain a total of approximately 22,500. This means, taking once more the figure of 1,000 registered electors which we regard as the maximum which can be polled per day, that not more than 25,000,000 electors could be polled in a single day, as against a total adult population of 130 million—a figure which closely corresponds to the figure we have given in connection with our estimate of the number of police required.

Opinion of local Governments and committees.

32. Finally, after discussing simplified polling methods with officials in every province, we are faced by the fact that without a single exception every one of the provincial Governments and the

provincial committees has not only declared that adult franchise is administratively impracticable to-day, but has placed the maximum of administrative practicability at some figure below 20 per cent. of the total population, corresponding to very much less than half of the adult population. In these circumstances, while we refrain from dogmatic assertions as to the exact numbers, or the exact percentage, of the population which can be polled either in each individual province, or in British India as a whole, we are of opinion that complete adult franchise is administratively impracticable at the present time.

General arguments against adult suffrage.

33. We turn now to the more general arguments against the immediate introduction of adult franchise. The two special problems which confront India in setting on foot a system of responsible government are the huge numbers involved—numbers which are far larger than have ever been made the foundation for a democratically governed state in history*—and the fact that only 8 per cent. of these are literate (men literates 13·9 per cent., women literates 2·1 per cent.). Literacy is by itself no test of wisdom, character, or political ability, and illiteracy by no means implies that the individual is not capable of casting an intelligent vote on matters within the range of his own knowledge and experience. The Indian villager, like the peasant all over the world, is a fairly shrewd person. Illiteracy, however, inevitably restricts the range of the individual's knowledge and his power of access to knowledge. He can read neither books nor newspapers, and is therefore dependent for knowledge of matters concerning his province, or India as a whole, or the outside world, upon what he can learn from the conversation of his neighbours, most of whom in India are also illiterate, supplemented by occasional readings by others from newspapers, and from canvassing and public meetings held by candidates and their agents at times of election. It is therefore much more difficult for the illiterate voter in an Indian village—and the villages contain 90 per cent. of the population of India—to obtain information upon public questions beyond the district in which he or she lives which will enable him or her to cast a discerning vote, than it is for the literate voter who can read newspapers, magazines, and books.

The impediment of illiteracy.

34. Illiteracy can be broken down only by universal primary education. Until this has been introduced, it should be possible to do something to help the illiterate voter through the growth of broad-

Note.—

Population of India (excluding Burma)	338,170,632
Population of British India (excluding Burma) ..	256,859,787
Population of the United States of America ..	122,775,046
Population of Germany	63,000,000
Population of Great Britain	44,500,000

casting. Broadcasting will certainly develop because of its use as a means of instructing, informing, and amusing the public, both literate and illiterate, in a multitude of ways. But it will also have a most important political use. The effectiveness of broadcasting is not lessened by illiteracy. It therefore makes it possible for political leaders to speak direct to a much larger number of individuals at election times, and between elections, than can be reached by the ordinary speeches or canvassing of the candidates themselves or their agents. We have ascertained from the British Broadcasting Corporation that there are no technical impediments in the way of erecting transmitting stations for each linguistic area, and that it would be possible for every village to acquire for a moderate sum a loud-speaking receiver to which 200 or 300 people could listen out of doors. The fact that a large number of villages are now served by some kind of motor-bus service would facilitate the maintenance of the set.

35. The breaking down of illiteracy in India in these and other ways is only a matter of time, and in proportion as it takes place the electoral problem will be simplified. But for the present it would be unwise to ignore the impediment which illiteracy creates to the successful working of democracy based upon adult franchise.

The absence of political organisations.

36. There is yet another aspect of illiteracy to be considered. While on the one hand it limits the range and experience of the voter, and so makes it more difficult for him to understand the provincial and national issues which are presented to him for settlement during a general election, on the other hand it places a greatly increased burden on the candidates and the political parties, for in the main it can only be through their agency that the illiterate voter is educated regarding the issues involved. We have had ample evidence to show that at election times there is at present a great deal of political activity. The percentage of the electorate which has gone to the polls in the elections which have taken place during the last twelve years (see para. 59) is proof of this. But the task of canvassing, or addressing, or otherwise educating an electorate, which hitherto has numbered only some 6 millions for the whole of British India, is a very different one from that of educating and canvassing an electorate, male and female, of 130 millions, and this is what adult franchise would involve.

The function of party.

37. The task of political education can be properly undertaken only by organised political parties. In no country in the world has democracy, either on a restricted or a universal franchise, ever

functioned successfully without a well-developed party system. The individual voter, however capable and educated, is unable to initiate policy, or to master the facts, local, national, and international, upon which that policy must be based. Under an autocratic system the responsibility for mastering the facts and initiating and carrying out policy rests in the hands of the ruler and his advisers and servants. Under a democratic system, the responsibility for mastering facts and formulating a policy passes to the party leaders, though to carry out this policy they must secure the support of the electorate. Political parties consist in practice of those people who are sufficiently interested in public questions to take an active part in trying to support a Government or to promote the policies of which they approve. Party organisation has always been essential in a successful democracy, for the return of unrelated individuals, however able, does not provide that steady majority without which a stable executive under a system of responsible government cannot exist. It is the instrument whereby leaders, local and national, are developed, and the desires and needs of the local elector are harmonised with the necessities and aspirations of the nation as a whole, and with the facts of the international situation. It is the only means whereby a disciplined political army can be created capable both of presenting a coherent policy throughout the country at times of election, and of ensuring stability to the executive Government, even when it is carrying through measures which may be unpopular in large numbers of constituencies. Party organisation, however, grows only by degrees, and is expensive to form and to run. To be effective, it must have agents in every village and town, as well as in the district and the national headquarters, so that it can permeate the whole country and address itself to every elector by means of public speeches, the distribution of literature, canvassing, and broadcasting.

38. Party organisation is still rudimentary in India. Local difficulties such as communal feeling have done much to hinder its growth. Such organisations as exist have been largely preoccupied with the question of securing national self-government for India, rather than with the policies which should be followed after responsible government has been attained. Indeed, it is only after responsible government has been introduced that the alignment of parties on normal political lines will begin to develop.

Conclusion.

39. The question of adult suffrage has been, in a sense, the largest that is before us, and we have endeavoured to set out candidly what can be said both for and against it. Having regard to the prodigious task of educating a mainly illiterate electorate, the fact that party organisation is still in its infancy, and the burden both for the

official machinery and for the candidates of dealing with 130 million voters, it seems to us to be the course of wisdom and statesmanship not to attempt to launch the new constitution on the basis of adult franchise, but to seek a more manageable basis, at the same time providing that the system of franchise will give reasonable representation to the main categories of the population. It will then be for the legislatures themselves, after a definite period has passed, to determine at what pace the electorate should be expanded and the date when they may wish to introduce adult suffrage.

CHAPTER III.—THE INDIRECT SYSTEM AND OTHER POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS OF ADULT FRANCHISE.

40. We have considered whether, if the immediate adoption of adult franchise is regarded as impracticable, certain modifications of it might not be recommended. There are five possible courses open to us :—

A. Adult suffrage by indirect voting.
B. Adult suffrage within certain age limits.
C. Adult suffrage in large or capital cities.
D. Household suffrage.
E. Indirect election through local bodies.

The village as a unit.

41. Before considering these proposals in detail, there is a preliminary issue to which we wish to refer. It has often been said, and indeed it is a fact, that the village is the most characteristic socio-political unit in India, and that 90 per cent. of the population of India live in villages. Why not therefore make the village the basis of the electoral system, by enabling it to place electors on the electoral roll in proportion to its numbers? Such a system, attractive as it appears at first sight, is however quite impracticable. The villages of modern India have in the vast majority of cases no self-governing institutions of their own. The revival of the panchayat system is of quite modern origin, and the total number of panchayats in British India to-day is only 11,770 out of a total of some 458,000 villages. There is therefore in the overwhelming majority of cases no representative body which could be made the medium for placing electors on the electoral roll. Moreover, it is the general testimony of officials and others in close touch with villages that the effect of making the village itself an electoral unit would be to intensify caste factions and local feuds, and to create not harmony but discord. The villagers can be enfranchised only by giving them the direct vote as individuals, or by forming them into small groups for the election of secondary electors. We discuss both these alternatives in the later pages of this Report.

A.—Adult suffrage by indirect voting.

42. It has been proposed that, if universal direct adult suffrage be ruled out, the whole population might be grouped in groups of 20, or 50, or 100, or other appropriate number, each primary group to elect from among its own number one or more secondary electors, who should form the constituencies for returning members to the

legislatures in the ordinary way. This is the system which is in operation in Egypt, Turkey, Iraq, and Syria to-day, and the evidence which we have obtained indicates that it can be and is made to work in these countries. The advantages claimed for the system are fourfold. It gives to every adult an equal vote at the primary stage. It makes things easy for the primary voter, because he is only asked to choose an elector from among neighbours whom he knows, instead of voting for a distant candidate, and on issues which it may be difficult for him to understand. It is simple to administer, because each village is the polling unit in the primary election and keeps its own register, and voters and officials have not to travel long distances to the polling stations. It probably secures a more intelligent and experienced secondary electorate to discharge the responsible task of choosing the member of the legislature.

Arguments against the indirect system.

43. On the other hand the disadvantages of the system are in our view much more serious. In the first place, it involves the abolition of the direct system of voting, to which India has become accustomed during the last twelve years through four elections held for the provincial councils, the Legislative Assembly, and the Council of State, and also through numerous elections for district and local boards, and municipalities. Some 7,000,000 electors who have hitherto been entitled to exercise the direct vote at elections to legislative bodies would thus lose it, and would obtain only an indirect vote in its place. The overwhelming mass of evidence we have received has been to the effect that the strongest opposition would be aroused by any proposal to abolish the direct vote.

44. In the second place, the indirect system is bound to lead to one of two results, neither of them desirable. Either the primary election would be a non-political election, in the sense that the group electors would simply choose a representative man or woman to exercise the responsibility of voting on their behalf—in which case it would provide very little political education for the people. Or it would become a political election, in which case the candidates and the parties would endeavour to secure the return of secondary electors pledged to themselves. The indirect system would then become tantamount to adult suffrage, with the expense and burden of a double election added thereto.

45. In the third place, under the indirect system the primary voters have no means of judging whether the secondary elector carries out their wishes or not. A member of the legislature speaks and votes in public, and his constituents are therefore able to follow his conduct and to make representations to him about it. The secondary voter, however, casts his ballot in secret, and the primary

electors can have no means of knowing how he has voted. In so far as the primary voters wish to secure the representation of certain political views, the indirect system cannot be said to be representative.

46. In the fourth place, the indirect system undoubtedly lends itself to manipulation and jerrymandering. The party in power, or local authorities, can manipulate the elections so as to secure the return of their own friends as secondary electors. Local magnates and other forces can bring strong pressure to bear at the primary stage when voting is public or informal. The fact that the number of secondary electors is small makes corruption in the election of members to the legislature far easier than under a system of direct election with a large electorate.

47. Moreover, certain provincial Governments and committees which were at one time inclined to support the indirect system have now abandoned it. For all these reasons we have unanimously decided to reject the universal indirect system.

B.—Adult suffrage within certain age limits.

48. It has been suggested that the difficulty of finding any system of restricted franchise which secures the representation of all sections of the community in proportion to their population, such as women, depressed classes, etc., might be overcome by giving adult franchise within certain age limits, for example over 30, or between 25 and 60. The objections to this proposal are two-fold. In the first place, if it is administratively impracticable, or for any reason inadvisable, to enfranchise more than, say, 15 to 20 per cent. of the population, the age limits would become very narrow. The inclusion even of those persons only who are over 40 years of age or between 30 and 50 years of age, would, as will be seen from the figures* given in the footnote to this paragraph, produce an impossibly large electorate.

*The following statistics based partly on the 1921 census (complete returns for the 1931 census are not yet available) illustrate the effect of the acceptance of certain alternative bases:—

No. of persons.	Male.	Female.	Total.
1. Over 20..	67,696,454	63,248,161	130,944,615
2. Over 30 (1921 Census) ..	58,339,388	54,054,426	112,393,814
3. Between 25 and 60 (1921 Census).	64,156,661	59,091,827	123,248,488
4. Over 40 (1921 Census) ..	34,657,263	32,630,086	67,287,289
5. Between 30 and 50 (1921 Census).	40,099,476	36,233,926	76,333,402

We do not think that such a system is advisable, or that it would commend itself to public opinion. It would mean the disfranchisement of existing voters outside those ages, or the maintenance of a discrimination which would give rise to resentment. Moreover, there would be serious administrative difficulties in the way of determining ages, and therefore in preparing the roll, in a country where there is no general compulsory registration of births. For these reasons we reject the proposal.

C.—Adult franchise for large towns.

49. A proposal has been made that adult franchise should be introduced immediately for all towns containing more than 100,000 inhabitants, or alternatively for the capital city in each province. This proposal has been urged largely on the ground that adult franchise is administratively feasible in large towns, while it is not at present feasible in the country districts. We cannot see our way, however, to accept the proposal. In the first place, while it is certainly true that it is possible to poll more voters in large cities than in country districts, because it is easier to find non-official presiding officers and suitable buildings, we have received little evidence to show that in fact adult franchise is administratively practicable in the large towns. In the second place, we think it is undesirable to differentiate between town and country in the matter of adult franchise. Towns, which are usually the most active political centres, already have some advantage over the country in that it is easier for their citizens to register their votes, and in some provinces, despite our efforts to ensure that the voters in town and country shall be in proportion to their respective populations, the towns have a small advantage. If, in addition, we were to enfranchise all adults in such towns, while enfranchising only some 15 per cent. in the country districts, the effect in our view would be to give a greater weight to the representatives from the towns than to those from the country—a result which it has been our object to avoid. We have decided, therefore, that the franchise system should apply uniformly, and that there should be no discrimination in favour either of town or of country.

D.—Household suffrage.

50. Another suggestion that has been put to us is that the household should be taken as the unit for the suffrage, so that the head of each household would be brought on to the electoral roll and be entitled to a vote. The main argument in favour of this scheme is that it would distribute voting power fairly over the different classes of the community ; and if the system were free from administrative difficulties the argument would be a strong one. But the objections are serious. In the first place, allowing an average

of five persons to each household, a system which allotted one vote to each household would bring on to the electoral roll more than 50,000,000 voters, the great majority of whom would be men. Unless women were to be almost disenfranchised, it would be necessary to adopt supplementary measures in order to bring an adequate number of women on to the roll, and if they were to amount to one-fifth of the electorate, the total electorate would then exceed 60,000,000, and would be nearly a quarter of the total population. As is shown in Chapter II, an electorate of this size would be quite unmanageable. In the second place, the organisation of the electorate on a household basis would involve serious administrative difficulties. In no province is the household used as an administrative unit for revenue purposes, and its adoption as a basis for the franchise would involve an extensive reorganisation of administrative arrangements on a new basis. Moreover, many troublesome disputes would arise as to the unit which should be adopted as the household and the individual who should be recognised as its head ; and if the matter were left to the ordinary village staff to settle, there would be great opening for corrupt practices. In many parts of the country, particularly in jungly and undeveloped tracts, the fluctuating and unstable habits of the people would present serious difficulties. As therefore the system of household suffrage would produce an electorate of unmanageable size, making no adequate provision for women, and would be extremely difficult to work, we are unable to recommend it.

E.—Indirect election through local bodies.

51. We have also considered another form of indirect voting under which the legislatures would be elected by constituencies formed of the members of local boards, municipalities, and other elected bodies. This system has been recommended on the ground that it would secure the return to the legislatures of more experienced members than direct election by constituencies comprising a large proportion of illiterates. There are however two strong arguments against it. The first is that it was the system in operation during the period of the Minto-Morley Reforms between 1910 and 1920, and from the evidence before us it is clear that the opposition to its reintroduction is very strong and almost universal. It is alleged that it led to a large amount of intrigue and was very uncertain in its operation. In the second place it is open to the powerful constitutional objection that, under a system of responsible government, it must lead either to the local elections being dominated by provincial or federal issues, with consequent loss to good local government, or to the legislatures being elected by people who have been returned on purely local issues, while the mass of the electorate would receive no education and exercise no real influence over provincial or federal policy. We have therefore decided to reject the system.

CHAPTER IV.—THE COMBINATION OF THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT SYSTEMS OF FRANCHISE.

52. We have therefore come to the conclusion that it is not at present practicable to adopt any system of adult suffrage, whether by direct or indirect election, or limited in the matter of age. We have however given very careful consideration to the proposal made by the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference that a direct system of franchise qualifications should be supplemented by a system of indirect election. The sub-Committee put forward their scheme in the following words :—

> " We recommend that, in addition to providing for this increase, the Commission should consider the introduction of a scheme by which all adults not entitled to a direct vote would be grouped together in primary groups of about 20 or in some other suitable manner, for the election of one representative member from each group, who would be entitled to vote in the provincial elections either in the same constituencies as the directly qualified voters or in separate constituencies to be formed for them."

Attractions of the combined system.

53. Some of us, at the outset of our enquiries, were greatly attracted by this idea. It seemed to combine the advantage of keeping in existence the system of franchise to which India has become accustomed, with some of the advantages of adult franchise, since it would bring the whole population in some way or other into connection with the legislatures. If it did not give every adult, male and female, a full vote, it would at least give him or her a portion of a vote, and therefore some share, however small, in the government of the land. Several provincial Governments and committees were also originally much attracted by the proposal and we received the greatest measure of co-operation and encouragement in our enquiries as to its feasibility.

Objections to the combined system.

54. These enquiries have led us to the conclusion that in spite of its superficial advantages the scheme is open to very serious objection. In the first place, under examination, the advantages of the system as giving representation to all sections of the community tend to disappear. The size of the group which has been most favoured has been between 20 and 25. This means that the group elector would exercise only one-twentieth or one-twentyfifth of the voting power of the direct elector, and would besides lack any

control over the manner in which the secondary elector cast his vote. Even if no increase at all were made in the direct electorate, the disparity between the power of the direct and the indirect voter would still be considerable. But if the direct electorate is to be extended to 10 per cent. of the population, as suggested by the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference, the voting power of the balance of the population, which would include most of the poorer classes, would become extremely small, and would certainly not enable these classes to return to the legislature any member of their own choice. For example, in a province with a total population of 50 millions and an adult population of 25 millions, there would be 5 million voters if 10 per cent. of the population were enfranchised. That would leave 20 million adults without the direct vote, who, if grouped in 20's, would be able to elect one million secondary electors. Thus, on an average, in every constituency, the electors, representing (in so far as they can be said to do so) 20 millions, would have only one-sixth of the votes, as compared with the 5 million direct electors. The real representation of women, of the depressed classes, and of labour under this system would be very small.

Administrative difficulties.

55. In the second place, the administrative difficulties in working the system are formidable. The general elections to the legislatures normally take place in November or December, which means that the electoral roll has to be published for criticism about July, and for final issue about September or October. In order that the names of the group electors might be placed on the roll by July it has been suggested, under the most practical proposal which has been put forward, that the group elections should take place during the preceding cold weather. The patwari, or other equivalent village official, would enumerate the houses, together with their adult inmates in each lane or hamlet, or in accordance with convenient geographical contiguity, and list the adults in groups containing 20 or 25 each. On the notified date, a junior official would visit the village, call together the inmates of each group of houses, both men and women, and ask them to decide informally, by show of hands or by some simple form of ballot, which of their number should be placed on the electoral roll to act as their *mukhi* or mouthpiece in the general election. In the event of dispute as to the validity of the election, a senior official would visit the village and settle the dispute summarily, if necessary by holding a second election. Opinions among officials who have had experience of conducting elections vary as to the practicability of working such a system. Some think there would be no difficulty. Others are certain that it would be cumbersome and expensive to work, and that it would break down in practice. It is also pointed out, with some reason, that the necessity of discriminating between villagers who have the direct vote and

those who have not, would create considerable complications in working the group system. Where the officials took an active interest in the voting and the election could be kept informal the system would probably work smoothly enough. But it is by no means certain that it would work at all in the event of the primary election becoming political, and if active controversy and high feeling between rival candidates or parties arose, there would be serious risk of its breaking down altogether. In any case it would involve a great amount of administrative work, requiring a considerable degree of administrative competence, over a long period of time, in order to place on the electoral roll a not very large additional number of names.

No support from public opinion.

56. In the third place, the proposal, which has received a good deal of consideration throughout the country, has not commended itself in any marked degree either to public or to official opinion. Every provincial Government and provincial committee is now against it, having been convinced, as we are, that its inherent difficulties and drawbacks outweigh its supposed advantages.

CHAPTER V.—THE EXTENSION OF THE DIRECT VOTE.

57. As we have come to the conclusion that adult suffrage, pure and simple, is impracticable at the present time, and as we have found that the disadvantages of any indirect scheme greatly outweigh its advantages, we have been driven to the conclusion that the best basis for the franchise for the system of responsible government to be introduced under the new constitution is the extension of the direct franchise, providing at the same time, in the words of the Prime Minister's letter, that " no important section of the community lacks the means of expressing its needs and its opinions."

The case against extension.

58. Before, however, examining this question in detail we feel it necessary to discuss a preliminary matter. Though the overwhelming mass of evidence we have received is in favour of the broad Round Table Conference proposal that the franchise should be extended so as to enfranchise " not less than 10 per cent. of the population and indeed a larger number—but not more than 25 per cent. of the total population—if that should, on a full investigation, be found practicable and desirable," there are those who take a more cautious view. There are people who have grave doubts whether it is wise to extend the franchise at all, especially with an electorate still largely illiterate, at the moment when the responsibility for government, under the Round Table Conference scheme, is being transferred to the legislatures.

Arguments from extensive interest in elections.

59. We recognise the force of this opinion, but would put forward certain considerations on the other side. In the first place, while it is certainly true that the great majority of villagers in India to-day have a very rudimentary idea of what the elections are about, and vote largely on personal grounds, the interest now taken in politics and in elections is far more widespread than is always realised outside India. Perhaps the best single test is the figures of the number of voters who actually go to the poll. The following

table (taken from the report of the Indian Statutory Commission, Vol. I, page 197) gives the figures for the elections of 1920, 1923 and 1926 :—

Province.	Percentage of population enfranchised (1926).	Percentage of votes polled in the elections of					
		1920.	1923.		1926.		
Madras	3·2	24·9	36·3	(11·4)	48·6	(19·2)	
Bombay	3·9	16·2	38·4	(15·3)	39·0	(19·3)	
Bengal	2·5	33·4	39·0		39·2	(13·0)	
United Provinces	3·5	33·0	42·2	(2·8)	50·2	(10·0)	
Punjab	3·4	32·0	49·3		52·4	(6·8)	
Bihar and Orissa	1·1	41·0	52·0		61·0		
Central Provinces	1·3	22·5	57·7		61·9		
Assam	3·7	16·4	37·5		35·0	(not known).	
Total ..	2·8	29·0	39·9		42·6		

The figures in brackets give the percentage of women who voted to female electors, and it is clear that the enfranchisement of women has slightly retarded the general rate of improvement. The figures generally show a connection between a small electorate and a high proportion of voters.

The percentages for Madras, Punjab, Bihar and Orissa and Assam relate to contested elections only. For other provinces the percentage of voters on the roll in all constituencies who polled their votes is shown. In all cases the figures cover special as well as general constituencies.

The figures for 1929–30 were as follow. As in 1920, they are affected by the fact that the Indian National Congress called upon its followers to abstain from the polls :—

Province.	Percentage of population enfranchised, 1929–30.	Percentage of votes polled in the elections of 1929–30.	
Madras	3·2	43·1	(18·1)
Bombay	3·9	11·4	(6·5)
Bengal	2·5	26·1	.. *
United Provinces	3·5	23·7	(3·9)
Punjab	3·1	38·5	(5·6)
Bihar and Orissa	1·1	33·2	(5·4)
Central Provinces	1·3	33·3	(8·8)
Assam	3·7	28·3	(6·5)

* Figures not available.

Moreover, elections for local, district and municipal boards are now the rule in all the provinces of India, and the number of votes cast at them is very large.

60. There is no question that India is now familiar with voting and elections. What might in 1919 have been regarded as an imported and unfamiliar institution is now an accepted commonplace of Indian political life. In the words of the Statutory Commission's Report (Vol. I, page 197) " it is clear that electoral contests do really attract the interest of the general body of voters." We are able to testify to the accuracy of this view in the North-West Frontier Province, where during our visit, elections were being held for the provincial council for the first time, where 49·8 per cent. of the electors polled in contested elections, and where the activity of candidates and the interest of voters were obvious to the eye.

Defects of present franchise.

61. Secondly, to quote once more from the Statutory Commission (Vol. I, page 191) the present franchise gives " a predominance and sometimes a monopoly of the vote to certain classes of the population. Thus, though it is true that in an agricultural country like India the bulk of the population appears extremely homogeneous in its needs and aspirations, whole sections of the population came to be excluded from the franchise. Chief among these are nearly all the women and the general body of the poor." While repeating a warning given in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report against " any such inordinate and sudden extension of the franchise as might lead to a breakdown of the machinery through sheer weight of numbers " (Vol. I, page 190), the Statutory Commission held that " the present franchise is too limited in its scope to provide the material from which to build any adequate scheme of representative government," (Vol. II, page 89) and that " there should now be such extension of the franchise as is reasonably practical, and that provision should now be made with a view to yet greater extension after a further interval " (Vol. II, page 89).

62. Further, the existing basis of the franchise is admittedly unsatisfactory in another respect. The Statutory Commission has pointed out (Vol. I, page 192) that " if education be the best test of capacity to use the vote, the present franchise seems largely to fail to take advantage of the material available. Since the percentage in 1921 of the adult male literates in the electoral areas of the Governors' provinces, except Burma, was 15·7, and the percentage of adult males with the vote is smaller—10·4 in the same area, 9·7 in Bengal, and 12·4 in the United Provinces—it might be expected that most voters would be literate. So far as figures are available, this does not seem to be so. It is certainly

the case that large numbers of voters are illiterate, or vote as such." Though no exact figures are available, the Statutory Commission stated that it had been estimated that in Bengal in 1926 half the Muslims and one-third of the Hindus who voted were illiterate, and that in the United Provinces the percentage was even higher. Our experience confirms this view that a very considerable proportion of the really literate population is to-day excluded from the rolls.

No deterioration in the electorate.

63. In the third place, most of the evidence we have received is to the effect that the extension of the electorate to 10 or 15 per cent. of the population will not result in any marked deterioration in the intelligence of the electorate. The new voters may have different interests from those of the old, but they will not be markedly less able to cast an intelligent vote. In all democracies, indeed, the great majority of the voters can only really choose between the rival candidates and parties which seek their suffrages. The successful working of democratic institutions is dependent far more upon the assistance of well-informed public-spirited and capable parties than upon the restriction of the electorate to those who are regarded as being politically educated.

Need for a broad basis for responsible government.

64. Finally, if the system of responsible government is to be stable, it is essential that the legislatures should be far more representative of the people than they are to-day. No one can say that an electorate in the provinces consisting of barely 3 per cent. of the population, or 10 per cent. of the adult male population, and of less than 1 per cent. of the population for the All-India Legislative Assembly, is in the modern world, an adequate foundation for a responsible system. If the new legislatures can be attacked on the ground that they represent only a single class or interest, or that they do not speak at least for those elements which recognise the importance to themselves of legislation and executive action, the chances of launching the constitution on an even keel, so that it can weather the storms which will inevitably beat upon it, will be greatly lessened.

Conclusion.

65. For these reasons, we concur with the view expressed by the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference quoted at the beginning of the chapter as to the extension of the electorate, in the provinces, providing at the same time for a proper distribution of voting power between the different classes and sections of the people. Our views on the franchise for the Federal Assembly will be found in a later portion of the Report.

CHAPTER VI.—THE BROAD BASIS OF OUR PROPOSALS.

66. We come now to our main problem, how, under a restricted franchise, to widen the electorate so that it will be " representative of the general mass of the population and that no important section of the community may lack the means of expressing its needs and its opinions." No complete solution can be propounded until a settlement of the communal problem has been reached, and at the present date that has not occurred. In some measure, therefore, as we shall point out more fully later, our conclusions are provisional and incomplete. But there are a few general principles which underlie all our proposals, and we desire to make them clear at the outset.

The ratio of voting power to population.

67. In the first place we have been more concerned to secure the best practicable distribution of voting power than the enfranchisement of any pre-conceived percentage of the population. Over a large proportion of the field, for instance, the head of an agricultural family can be said to speak for the interests not only of himself but of all those members of his family who reside with him in the village. Women voters act not only for themselves but in considerable measure for their sex as a whole. Established trade unions speak not only for their members but for industrial labour as a whole. Depressed class voters can usually be said to represent the special interests of their class. The same is true of commerce, landlords, and so on. Provided the main categories of the population have representation which bears a fair relation to their numbers, a restricted franchise nominally confined to 15 per cent. of the population may represent in effect the vital interests of the majority of the adult population. Moreover, it is misleading to take population as the basis of the estimate, for no country enfranchises children or much more than 50 per cent. of its population. Broadly speaking our proposals will enfranchise nearly 30 per cent. of the adult population, or 43 per cent. of the adult men, and 10 per cent. of the adult women.

Property and educational qualifications.

68. Property has from the outset been the main foundation of the franchise. It is a system which is well understood in India, where it has been in force for local bodies for nearly two generations. It was accepted by the Southborough Committee as the main basis of the constitution which was introduced twelve years ago and all the evidence we have received shows that it is now well established and commands general approval. We propose accordingly to retain it both for the provincial and for the federal legislatures. But we have endeavoured to lower the property qualification so as to bring

on to the roll the great bulk of the landholders, the tenants, and the urban rent payers and a considerable section of the poorer classes.

69. As a second basis for the franchise we have recommended an educational standard. We propose that different standards should be fixed for the provincial and for the federal legislatures, and for men and for women, for reasons which will be explained later. But we consider it essential that the educated classes should be enfranchised, thus remedying the anomaly pointed out by the Statutory Commission. We think also that in a largely illiterate country every encouragement should be given to education. Moreover, the educational qualification provides for an automatic but gradual extension of the franchise, and secures representation for junior members of joint families.

Provision for special classes.

70. In the electoral qualification for the provincial legislatures we have provided equality between the sexes, but inasmuch as comparatively few women own property, and far fewer women than men are literate, we have proposed special qualifications for women which will ensure that more than one-fifth of the electoral roll will consist of women. We also suggest measures whereby a certain number of women will be returned to the legislatures during the early days of the constitution.

71. In the case of the depressed classes the question of their representation in the legislatures is outside the scope of our reference. We have, however, furnished information as to their numbers, and we have made proposals designed to secure them substantial representation on the electoral roll.

72. As regards labour, in addition to lowering the qualification so as to enfranchise large numbers of the industrial employees in the towns, we have made provision for the direct representation of industrial labour in the Federal Assembly and in all the provincial legislatures.

73. We propose that the existing representation of commerce and industry, the universities, and the landlords should be maintained but that the number of seats allotted to each of these interests should not be increased. As it is proposed to enlarge the legislatures to between two and three times their present size, the representation of these special interests will be proportionately smaller than it is at present.

74. The classes for which it is most difficult to provide are the tenants-at-will, the landless labourers and the less prosperous village craftsmen and artisans. In some measure, however, they will

be represented under the provision we have made for the depressed classes and for labour, and in some provinces considerable numbers will find a place on the general electoral roll.

75. Finally we have endeavoured as far as possible to secure a fair proportionate representation between town and country.

76. As far as we can estimate, the total number of voters on the provincial rolls will be increased under these proposals from 7 millions to over 36 millions, out of a total adult population of 133 millions. The proportion of adult males who will be enfranchised will be 43·4 and of adult females 10·5.

The Federation.

77. The problem of securing a balanced distribution of voting power is far more difficult in the case of the representation of British India in the federal legislatures. Area and numbers make it impossible to enfranchise either the same numbers or the same classes. We propose to enlarge the electorate to 8,500,000, as against the present figure of 1,140,000, and we have made provision for a considerable representation of women on the electoral roll. We have also endeavoured to secure that the Assembly will represent all the main elements of the population by providing special representation in it for women and labour, for commerce and industry, and for landlords. As in the case of the provincial legislatures, we do not propose to increase the number of seats allotted to commerce and landlords and they will therefore form a smaller proportion in the federal lower house than they do in the present Legislative Assembly. We have not dealt with the depressed class representation, for reasons already given. The Senate will reflect the whole electorate enfranchised for the provincial councils.

Ratio of voters to population.

78. It is obviously impossible under any system of restricted franchise to secure exact proportional representation between all classes and sections. As we have pointed out, even adult franchise which brings all classes into the electoral roll in proportion to their population strength may conspicuously fail to secure for them proportionate representation in the legislatures unless the system of representation adopted is suitable. Under our proposals, and assuming that a communal settlement is made which secures representation to the principal communal minorities, the legislatures will reflect all the main sections of the Indian population. This will give authority to the legislatures themselves, since it may fairly be claimed that they will represent the general mass of the population and also that within them no important section will lack the opportunity of expressing its needs and opinions.

79. There is one other general observation we must make. The Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference made the following recommendation :—" We recommend that in any given area the franchise qualifications should be the same for all communities ; but we desire that the Franchise Commission in making their proposals should bear in mind that the ideal system would as nearly as possible give each community a voting strength proportionate to its numbers, and that the Commission should so contrive their franchise system as to secure this result in so far as it may be practicable." In the Prime Minister's letter of instructions we were asked to report on the desirability or otherwise of giving each community a voting strength proportionate to its numbers. In our view, it is certainly desirable that the franchise system should produce this result, at any rate in the case of the major communities. Though we have kept this question in view when framing our proposals, it is impossible at this stage to state how closely the ratio between electors and population will correspond, because many of the figures we give as to the effect of property and educational qualifications, especially in the case of women, are estimates, or based on estimates. It will not be possible to arrive at a full appreciation of the effect of our schemes until they have been worked out in detail. We recommend therefore that as soon as the basis of the new franchise has been approved instructions should be issued for the preparation of an electoral roll on the qualifications finally accepted. If it is found that the ratio of the voters to the population is markedly discrepant in the case of any community, it will be necessary to consider what action, if any, is required in order to rectify the disparity. This information should be made available as early as possible, in view of its importance at the next stage when the constituencies will be delimited.

PART II.

THE PROVINCES.

CHAPTER VII.—THE PROVINCIAL FRANCHISE SCHEMES.

80. We now proceed to discuss the general basis of the franchise which we recommend for adoption. Its main element is a property qualification, though we propose to accept the recommendation of the Statutory Commission that a special qualification based on education, independently of property, should be added, and we also propose other qualifications for women and depressed classes which are discussed in the chapters relating to those subjects.

General considerations.

81. In a country like India, franchise schemes based upon a property qualification must of necessity vary considerably in detail from province to province. The report of the Southborough Committee which drew up the first franchise schemes in 1918–19 was criticised on the ground that it failed to a large extent to establish principles; but that Committee, like ourselves, were driven to the adoption of a property qualification, and having covered the same ground, we agree with them that this is a matter in which uniformity over the whole country is neither possible nor desirable. It is not possible in fact to lay down that the payment of a particular sum as revenue or rent or the possession of property of a certain value shall qualify for a vote throughout India. Provinces like Bombay, the Punjab, the United Provinces and the Central Provinces, which have developed their land revenue administration through many generations, naturally base their franchise schemes on their revenue

systems. These systems, too, differ widely from one another, and rents, for example, in northern India are, generally speaking, much higher than in the central and southern parts of the country. In Bengal and Bihar where owing to the permanent settlement of the land revenue, no similar revenue system is in force, a different basis for the franchise must be found. Madras, which has for many years devoted much attention to developing its system of local self-government, proposes to base its franchise for the legislatures on that in force for local bodies which includes landholding as well as local taxation qualifications. These are very briefly a few of the broad reasons which make variety in franchise schemes inevitable and the search for uniformity vain.

82. While we have succeeded in every province except Bihar and Orissa in giving effect to the wish of the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference, endorsed by the Prime Minister, that not less than 10 per cent. of the population should be immediately enfranchised, we have not built up the provincial schemes on any preconceived ideas as to the numbers to be attained. The great variation in the percentages of the population now enfranchised in the different provinces would make it very difficult to level up the whole country to a uniform percentage at the present time. Where, as in Bihar and Orissa and the Central Provinces, the existing electorate is only a little over one per cent. of the total population, an immediate increase to 10 per cent. involves an eight or nine-fold increase, whereas in provinces where the electorate is now between three and four per cent. of the population, an increase to 15 per cent. or over can be obtained without unduly straining the administrative machine. It will be apparent from a detailed examination of our proposals that what we have done is to fix the franchise qualification in each province as low as we considered possible, having regard to all the circumstances of the case. We have then considered what classes would fail to get representation or would obtain inadequate representation under the standard we adopted, and in the chapters on women, labour and the depressed classes we recommend special arrangements in order to secure for them representation on the electoral roll or in the legislatures which they might fail to obtain if left to take their chance under our general franchise scheme. In our discussions with local Governments and local franchise committees and in the examination of witnesses on local problems, considerations of this kind have weighed with us much more than any desire to work up to a pre-determined percentage.

Educational qualification.

83. We propose, in addition to the property qualifications, which as we have indicated, must vary from province to province, to introduce an additional qualification based on education, independently of property; and this educational qualification should, we consider, be uniform as far as possible throughout the country. The evidence which we have received shows that there are numerous educated men in every province, who are at present excluded from the franchise because they lack the prescribed property qualifications, and we think it is desirable that such persons should be admitted to the privilege of the franchise. A provision of this kind will be found particularly useful in the case of civil servants, schoolmasters and others in a similar position, and also of joint families of which at present only the head or managing member is entitled to the vote. After consideration of the various stages in the educational systems in force, we would grant the vote to all those who have successfully completed the upper primary course, which involves four or five years attendance at a primary or elementary school. It connotes ability to read and write and knowledge of simple arithmetic, and the course usually includes also a certain amount of instruction in elementary history and geography. We understand that relapse into illiteracy after undergoing this course seldom if ever takes place. Certificates are now usually granted to boys who pass this test, and the production of such a certificate by a man who has attained the age of 21 years should entitle him to be put on the electoral roll. In the case of those who left school some time ago, there may be difficulty in proving that they completed the upper primary course while at school, but the educational authorities should be instructed to give every assistance in such cases by an examination of the school registers where they are available; and if there is a demand for it, a special examination might be instituted for the benefit of those who apply for the vote on the ground that they are educated up to the prescribed standard, though they are unable to produce documentary proof of the fact. We have mentioned the upper primary standard because it is the most general, but we understand that there are other standards of a coresponding character for Moslem boys in *madrassas* and *maktabs*, for the pupils of Sanskrit or vernacular *pathshalas*, etc., and for Sikh boys in *dharmsalas* where instruction is given by *granthis* and *gyanies*. Local Governments should be empowered to treat the passing of a test in these institutions which they consider equivalent to the upper primary standard as qualifying for admission to the franchise.

84. We recommend this educational qualification for men. In the case of women, for the reasons discussed in Chapter VIII we recommend the qualification of simple literacy only. The advantages of our proposals in regard to these qualifications for men and women are twofold. In the first place, they provide an opportunity for politically minded persons to get on to the roll with very little trouble, and in the second place, as facilities for education expand, this qualification will lead to an automatic expansion of the electoral roll.

Wages and rent as a basis for franchise.

85. We propose in every province to continue the existing enfranchisement of all income tax payers. We have taken a good deal of evidence regarding the suggestion of the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference that the term " property " should be understood as including the receipt of wages whether in cash or kind. There would, however, be great administrative difficulties in making the receipt of wages a basis for the franchise. In villages, where the employment of agricultural labour is not constant, and where the remuneration is sometimes paid in cash and sometimes in kind and sometimes by permission to cultivate land, it would be an impossible task to ascertain whether the wages earned by individuals in a year had reached the prescribed standard or not. The difficulties would be less serious in the case of large industrial concerns which keep regular books and attendance rolls, but would still be formidable in the case of smaller firms relying to a great extent on casual labour. As will be seen, we propose other means of providing for the representation of industrial labour, and the majority of us do not recommend the adoption of wages as one of the bases for the general franchise. We are prescribing rental qualifications in towns which should bring in a considerable section of the labouring classes.

Preparation of electoral roll.

86. In regard to the application of the various qualifications which we propose for admission to the franchise, we think that the general principle should be that the authority charged with the preparation of the roll should *suo motu* enter on the roll all those who possess the necessary qualification, namely those who are shown in the revenue records to possess the necessary revenue or rental qualification or who are already entered in the taxation registers of local boards or municipalities or union boards as possessing the prescribed assessment qualification, or have the upper primary qualification as recorded in authoritative educational records. Where the registering authority has no means of ascertaining whether a person has a qualification or not, it will be necessary for that person to apply for registration, and it will always be open to anyone who considers that he has been improperly omitted from the roll to apply for registration before the roll is finally closed and published.

87. The following table gives a bird's-eye view of the general effect of our recommendations.

—	Present Electorate.			Proposed Electorate.			Percentage of proposed total electorate to total population.	Percentage of proposed electorates to adult population.			Remarks.
	Men.	Women.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Total.		Men.	Women.	Total.	
Madras	1,342,031	127,969	1,470,000	5,744,000	1,500,000	7,244,000	15·5	48·2	12·0	29·0	
Bombay ..	841,099	47,702	888,801	2,976,000	750,000	3,726,000	17·1	50·5	14·3	33·5	
Bengal	1,289,994	41,809	1,331,803	6,500,000	1,500,000	8,000,000	16·0	48·1	12·6	31·6	Estimate.
United Provinces	1,590,066	56,224	1,646,290	6,000,000	1,500,000	7,500,000	15·5	45·3	12·4	29·7	
Punjab	719,801	25,199	745,000	2,350,000	450,000	2,800,000	11·9	36	8·7	24·1	
Bihar and Orissa	411,400	6,924	418,324	3,150,000	350,000	3,500,000	9·3	32·9	3·5	17·9	
Central Provinces	192,000	7,500	199,500	1,600,000	350,000	1,950,000	12·5	40·1	8·7	24·4	
Assam	286,508	2,324	288,832	820,000	220,000	1,040,000	12·1	33·5	10·7	23·4	
North-West Frontier Province.	119,922	—	119,922	242,000	—	242,000	9·9	36·9	—	20·1*	
Total ..	6,792,821	315,651	7,108,472	29,382,000	6,620,000	36,002,000	14·1	43·4	10·5	27·6	

* Rough estimate on Punjab basis. At the present stage, it is impossible to estimate the number of women who will come on to the roll.

88. Although in the country as a whole the enfranchisement we propose covers only a little over 27 per cent. of the adult population or 14 per cent. of the total population, we have in fact provided for the representation in the legislatures of a very much larger percentage by special measures for women and labour. Moreover, it will be seen that our scheme will give a direct vote to 43·4 per cent. of the adult male population of the country, and in the larger provinces nearly half (in Bombay more than half) of the total male population will be enfranchised. The ratio of men to women enfranchised is nearly 4 to 1.

Size of electorates.

89. The total electorates which we have suggested are in most cases considerably higher than those which local Governments had proposed and in some cases they are above the limits which they have considered to be administratively feasible. We have, however, in every case considered with the utmost care the staff available both for the preparation of the rolls and for the actual conduct of the elections (including the police), and we have in no case recommended a total electorate exceeding a number which is not in our considered judgment administratively feasible. In estimating the polling capacity of the different provinces, we have adopted the basic figure of 1,000 registered electors as the average maximum pollable per polling station—a figure at which we have arrived after full consideration of the factors in the problem which are set forth in Chapter II. We have also taken into consideration the fact that it is certain that the number of voters who will actually poll will be greatly below the total strength of the registered electors. In the four general elections that have taken place in India since 1920, it is only in rare instances that more than half of the electorate have voted and the general average is below 40 per cent. In Ceylon, at the first general election held under the system of adult suffrage only 58 per cent. of the electorate in contested constituencies polled, while for the island as a whole, the proportion was only 45 per cent. We think it is relevant to take uncontested elections into account in this connection, since, if they are numerous, the capacity of the staff available to conduct contested elections is increased, and they can be completed in a shorter time than would be possible if all elections were contested. It may also be pointed out that the additional polling requirements entailed by an increase of the electorate may be met in two ways, either by an increase in the number of polling stations and of the polling staff, or by

spreading the polling over a longer period. Inability to provide additional presiding or polling officers is not therefore an insuperable bar to some increase of the electorate, for the necessary polling arrangements can be made by employing the available staff on polling operations for a slightly longer period. Their ordinary work will of course suffer by their absence on electoral duties, and it is desirable on this account, apart from other reasons, that elections should not be unduly prolonged. But if it is necessary to suspend non-urgent public business once every five years or so for the purposes of a general election, it does not greatly matter whether the suspension lasts for three days or for four.

90. Having regard to the fact that out of the total electorate of 36 millions which we propose, 6,500,000 will be women, who, at any rate during the earlier years, may not go to the polls in such numbers as the men have gone hitherto, it may safely be assumed that at the outside not more than two-thirds of the greatly enlarged provincial electorate will poll at the first election. This would be well below 10 per cent. of the total population, a number which every province except Bengal and Bihar and Orissa has admitted to be administratively feasible. We have discussed the case of these two provinces in further detail below.

At later elections the numbers will probably increase, especially if issues of a popular character come to the front, but by that time the provincial Governments will have been able to perfect their electoral arrangements in the light of experience.

91. All these considerations confirm us in the view that in our desire to establish electorates of a size which will make them really representative of the various classes of the population, we have not gone beyond the limits of administrative practicability.

The ratio between rural and urban enfranchisement.

92. The Southborough Franchise Committee said that the qualifications adopted by them would result in enfranchising a substantially higher proportion of the urban than of the rural population, a result which they believed to be justified by the higher standard of wealth and intelligence in the towns. We are not satisfied that this disparity is justifiable and we have done our best to remedy it, so far as practicable. Complete information as to the result of our efforts in this direction is not yet available, and for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Assam it is not possible at present to give even approximate figures. In the two latter provinces, however, the urban population is less than 5 per cent. of the total population and the matter is not of great importance.

93. For the remaining provinces the result is shown in the following statement :—

——	Urban vote.	Percentage of urban population.	Rural vote.	Percentage of rural population.
Madras	600,000	9	6,644,000	16
Bombay	1,095,000	22	2,631,000	15
United Provinces ..	740,000	13·6	6,760,000	15
Punjab	295,000	10	2,505,000	12
Central Provinces ..	269,000	16	1,681,000	12

94. As we have shown, the figures are at present only approximate, and complete and accurate information will not be available until the electoral rolls have been worked out in some detail. But the table, as it stands, indicates that in Madras, where there is at present no marked disparity between the urban and the rural voting strength, a higher proportion of rural voters will be enfranchised than of urban voters. In that province the main qualification is based on the franchise qualification for local bodies, which tends to be higher in municipalities than in rural areas. In Bombay, on the other hand, the present disparity will continue, and we have not felt justified in asking the local Government to increase the vote in the rural constituencies to the level of the urban constituencies as this would produce an electorate much larger than they could reasonably be asked to handle. In the Central Provinces, where the urban vote is slightly higher than the rural, the matter is not of great importance, as the urban population is only 1,500,000, or less than 10 per cent. of the total population. In the two great provinces of Northern India, the United Provinces and the Punjab, the ratios are fairly even and indicate that in these two provinces a fair measure of equality will be reached between the voting strength of town and country constituencies.

95. For the purpose of these comparisons, we have taken as the urban population the areas classed as urban during the census ; that is, all municipalities, cantonments, and other towns with over 5,000 inhabitants which, though they have not attained self-government, still possess urban characteristics differentiating them from the larger class of purely agricultural villages. The actual influence

which the urban vote may have on rural areas depends largely on the extent to which urban areas are included in rural constituencies, and it is not possible to indicate at this stage what the proportion of the purely urban vote in mixed constituencies will be. The figures as they stand indicate only the number of electors on the roll, and therefore the number of voters per member which would be found in town and country constituencies respectively provided no corrective were applied. The question of the relative representation of town and country in the legislatures will depend upon the manner in which constituencies are delimited and at the delimitation stage one of the most important matters to be taken into consideration will be the desirability of making the representation of town and country in the legislatures proportionate to the population in each. The matter will also come up for consideration in mixed constituencies consisting partly of urban and partly of rural areas. In Bombay, for example, it would be advisable, other things being equal, to arrange constituencies so that urban areas will not have a preponderating influence in mixed constituencies ; while in Madras, on the other hand, where the rural voting strength is the greater, it may be found desirable to give some weightage to urban areas in the distribution of seats.

Evolution of the provincial schemes.

96. We now proceed to discuss the schemes which we recommend for adoption in the different provinces. We may first describe briefly the manner in which the schemes came to be drawn up in their present form. On arrival in a province, or in some cases a few days earlier, we received the answers submitted by the local Government and the provincial committee to our questionnaire, accompanied by a mass of statistical material and the written statements of the witnesses who proposed to give evidence before us. As a rule, we held a preliminary discussion with the provincial franchise committee in order to obtain some knowledge of local conditions and to clear up any points that were doubtful in the papers submitted to us. At the same time, we made a careful collation and examination of these papers in order to obtain a complete understanding of the franchise schemes put forward, to ascertain what classes were covered by and what classes were excluded from them, and to consider what supplementary measures were necessary for the unenfranchised classes and for women, labour, the depressed classes, and special interests. In some cases we deputed a sub-committee of our members to meet a sub-committee of the provincial committee in order to discuss matters of detail and at every place there were numerous informal discussions between individual members of our Committee and of the provincial committee. Our examination of the witnesses was designed largely to elucidate points with which they were specially competent to deal, though many witnesses had schemes of

their own covering the ground either partially or completely, which they desired to advocate. Having thus obtained a substantial knowledge of local conditions and needs, we were in a position to discuss their schemes with the local Governments and the provincial franchise committees and to indicate means of extending or supplementing them, which in our view required consideration. As a rule, on our departure, we left with the local committees and local Governments a list of the points on which we desired further opinions or information, and in due course we received their replies to our questions and their final proposals. In nearly all cases the original schemes were considerably modified as the result of the discussions during our visit, a more liberal measure of enfranchisement being provided. It is these final schemes which are described in the following sections. It would be impossible, without making the report unduly bulky, to set forth their evolution in detail or to acknowledge individually the assistance we received from many sources, both official and non-official, in working them out. The evidence of the numerous witnesses whom we examined was in most cases most helpful and useful. As a rule, the general tendency of the evidence was in favour of a wide expansion of the franchise, but most non-official witnesses were handicapped in drawing up their schemes owing to the absence of detailed information which is available only in official records. While, therefore, we examined all proposals with the utmost care, the application of precise statistical tests in many cases indicated the necessity for considerable revision before they could be used in practice. Without entering into further details, it must suffice to say that each scheme is the product of many minds, and we are grateful to all who collaborated in bringing them to their present form.

97. In the case of each province we have in the first place given a brief statistical summary of the salient facts regarding its area, population and present electorate. We have then described the schemes finally recommended for adoption by the local Government and the provincial franchise committee after discussion with us, and we have in conclusion set forth our own recommendations. The problems relating to the franchise and representation of women, labour and the depressed classes are dealt with at length in separate chapters of our Report, but a brief description of the proposals made relating to them* has been included in each provincial summary in order that a complete picture of the provincial schemes may be obtained. As we have indicated, these schemes provide for a much wider enfranchisement than could be effected by a bare property or educational qualification and must be considered as a whole. In most cases we have raised the final figures above the local Government's scheme, mainly in order to provide adequate representation for women and for other miscellaneous reasons which are stated in

* See in particular paragraphs 215 and 315.

the case of each province. But except in the case of Bengal, where the absence of detail in the proposals of the local Government and the provincial committee has compelled us to put forward a scheme of our own for consideration, we have satisfied ourselves that our proposals do not go beyond what is administratively feasible.

I.—MADRAS.

Statistics.

Population (1931).	Male.	Female.	Total.
Total	23,082,999	23,657,108	46,740,107
Muslim	1,631,716	1,674,221	3,305,937
Hindu	20,380,257	20,897,113	41,277,370
Europeans	6,417	4,248	10,665
Anglo-Indians	13,948	14,721	28,669
Indian Christian	857,230	876,013	1,733,243
Others	193,431	190,792	384,223

Area.—142,277 square miles.
No. of districts, 26.

Total urban population	6,346,519
Total rural population	40,393,588
Present electorate	1,470,000
Percentage of total population at present enfranchised	3·1

Percentage of rural and urban voters to rural and urban population (1926), 3·2 and 6·0, respectively.

Existing qualifications.

98. The existing qualification in Madras is, for rural areas, the holding of land possessing an annual rental value of not less than Rs. 10, and for urban areas the ownership or occupation of property of the annual rental value of not less than Rs. 60 in Madras City, or the payment of property or profession tax to the aggregate annual amount of Rs. 3 elsewhere. On this basis, the franchise is restricted to substantial landholders and tenants. The electors form 3·1 per cent. of the total population, the proportion of male electors to the adult male population being 11·2 per cent.

Proposals of the Madras Government.

99. It is proposed by the Madras Government to introduce, subject to a few modifications, the franchise provided by the recently amended Madras District Municipalities' and Local Boards Acts, which briefly makes the occupation of any land, or assessment to any tax, however small, a qualification for the vote. In Madras City the qualifying annual rental value will be reduced to Rs. 18. The following in detail are the qualifications which it is proposed to introduce for general electorates :—

(1) Assessment to income-tax ; or

(2) Payment of tax under the Madras Motor Vehicles Taxation Act for the whole official year immediately before the electoral roll is prepared or revised ; or

(3) Being a registered landholder, inamdar, ryotwari pattadar, or occupancy ryot under the Madras Estates Land Act ; or

(4) Assessment to ground-rent payable to Government ; or

(5) Payment of property tax for the two half-years immediately prior to the preparation or revision of the roll under the Madras City Municipality Act, or the Madras District Municipalities Act, or the Madras Local Boards Act ; or

(6) Payment of profession tax for the two half-years immediately prior to the preparation or revision of the roll under the Madras City Municipality Act or the Madras District Municipalities Act ; or

(7) Being during the whole of the previous *fasli* a kanamdar or kuzhikanamdar or the holder of a kudiyiruppu or a verampatamdar having fixity of tenure, each of these terms bearing the meaning defined in the Malabar Tenancy Act, 1929 ; or

(8) Being for the whole of the *fasli* immediately preceding the preparation or revision of the electoral roll a mortgagee with possession, lessee or tenant of immovable property (other than a house property) of an annual value of Rs. 100 in Madras City or a municipality and Rs. 50 elsewhere in the Presidency ; or

(9) Being a guardian of a minor possessing one of the above property qualifications ; or

(10) Occupying during the whole of the previous year as sole tenant house property on which property tax or house tax has been duly paid for the year ; or

(11) Being a retired or pensioned officer, non-commissioned officer or soldier of His Majesty's armed forces ; or

(12) Being able to read and write in any language ; or

(13) Being a registered joint landholder, inamdar, pattadar, or occupancy ryot entitled to an additional vote on an application signed by a majority of the registered jointholders, votes being allowed to joint holders on the following scale :—

For landholders and holders of whole inam villages of Rs. 1,000 and above annual rental—one vote for every complete Rs. 500 of annual rental, and

For joint holders of minor inams, ryotwari pattas and estate pattas of Rs. 100 and over—one vote for every complete Rs. 500 of assessment, rent or kist.

The additional votes will be given only to persons included among the registered joint holders, and the registration should have been made not later than the *fasli* previous to the one in which the rolls are under preparation or revision.

100. The local Government propose that those qualified under items 7 to 13 above should be entered on the list only on application to the officer preparing the electoral roll.

101. It is anticipated that the total number of persons enfranchised under the local Government's scheme will be 6,494,000 or 13·7 per cent. of the total population. This number includes about 968,000 women and about 366,000 persons belonging to the depressed classes. It is proposed to provide two seats for the representatives of organised labour and nine seats for Indian Christians. It is estimated that the total number of male voters will be 5,600,000 out of an adult male population of 11,932,000. The local Government calculates that of the balance over 4,000,000 will be members of families or households the head of which will have a vote, while over a million belong to the depressed classes for the representation of which separate provision is proposed. The totally unrepresented adult males will, therefore, number less than one million, and will consist mainly of landless labourers in town and country, and beggars, and of cultivators with minute temporary holdings and fluctuating tendencies for whom it would be difficult to secure direct representation under any system short of adult suffrage.

102. It may be added that the Madras Government's scheme will correct the existing disparity between the urban and the rural areas. The population of the urban areas, including Madras City, is just under 8 per cent. of the whole. The urban electors are at present 13·6 per cent. of the total electorate and under the new franchise will be about 9 per cent.

Proposals of the Madras Provincial Committee.

103. The Madras Provincial Committee agree with the local Government in suggesting the adoption of the municipal and district board franchise as the basis of the franchise for elections to the

Legislative Council. The proposals of the Committee closely correspond with those of the Government and produce a correspondingly representative electorate.

104. The Committee add to their proposals a rider that, if possible, the Municipal and Local Boards Acts should be so amended as to reduce the possibility of manipulation of vehicle and animal taxes for vote-creating purposes, or that alternatively the election rules should be so framed as to give the registration officer power to refuse registration where it is proved that there has been such manipulation. They recognise the possibility of such manipulation in large constituencies but think that it can be exaggerated. They point out that in the maximum scales laid down for municipal taxation the lowest profession tax, As. 8 per half year, is the same as the lowest animal tax, while the lowest vehicle tax, namely, that of a bicycle, is Rs. 2 per half year. The minimum income on which profession tax can be levied is Rs. 150 in the half year.

105. In neither municipal nor rural areas should licence fees such as those for carrying on dangerous and objectionable trades, market stalls, temporary stalls, sun-shades, and the like confer the franchise. It is understood that these considerations have been taken into account by the local Government in framing their proposals.

Our proposals.

106. The Madras Government's scheme has been worked out with great care and completeness, and we are prepared to accept it substantially as it stands, subject to three modifications. We are reluctant to curtail the local Government's plan in any respect, but we think it desirable to make the educational qualification for men uniform in all provinces. We therefore propose to substitute in the case of men for the local Government's condition (12), " being able to read and write in any language," the possession of a certificate that a man has passed the upper primary examination or other examination which is accepted by the local Government as being of a similar character. We estimate, roughly, that this alteration will involve a reduction of 200,000 in the number of adult males under the local Government's scheme.

107. We add 344,000 in order to bring the number of the depressed classes on the roll up to 10 per cent. of their population in accordance with the proposals made in Chapter X.

108. The scheme of the local Government makes provision for 718,000 women on the property qualification, but if that qualification stands alone, and if the wives of those who have the property qualification prescribed for the existing council are not admitted to the franchise, as we have suggested should be done in the case of other provinces (see paragraph 215), the result will be that the ratio of

enfranchised women to enfranchised men will be lower in Madras than in any other province. We have no doubt that public opinion in Madras, which has always taken a notable lead in the woman's movement, would regard this result with considerable dissatisfaction, and we suggest that in Madras, as elsewhere, the wives of men possessing the property qualifications prescribed for the existing council should be added to those qualified by literacy or on the local taxation or property basis.

109. As far as we can estimate, the effect of our modification of the local Government's scheme will be to produce in Madras an electorate made up approximately as follows :—

	Men.	Women.	Total.
Number enfranchised on the local self-government basis.	5,400,000	968,000	6,368,000
Wives of men possessing the property qualifications for the present council..	—	700,000	700,000
Additional depressed classes ..	344,000	—	344,000*
Total	5,744,000	1,668,000	7,412,000

* It is not practicable at present to estimate how many of these will be women.

or in round figures, a total of 7,500,000 voters, or 16 per cent. of the total population, of whom 1,500,000, or 20 per cent., would be women.

II.—BOMBAY.

Statistics.

Population (1931).	Bombay (excluding Sind and Aden).			Sind.			Grand Total.
	Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.	
Total	9,322,604	8,669,449	17,992,053	2,180,954	1,706,116	3,887,070	21,879,123
Muslim	857,712	725,547	1,583,259	1,589,735	1,241,065	2,830,800	4,414,059
Hindu	8,041,155	7,561,777	15,602,932	566,517	448,708	1,015,225	16,618,157
European	11,226	5,316	16,542	4,383	1,910	6,293	22,835
Anglo-Indian ..	7,379	6,797	14,176	1,154	776	1,930	16,106
Indian Christian ..	145,493	121,967	267,460	3,822	2,805	6,627	274,087
Others	259,639	248,045	507,684	15,343	10,852	26,195	533,879

Area—123,599 square miles.
Number of districts—28.
Total urban population—4,901,885.
Total rural population—16,977,238.
Present electorate—888,801.
Percentage of total population at present enfranchised—4·1.
(2·2 per cent. rural, 10 per cent. urban.)

Existing qualifications.

110. The existing property qualification in Bombay, which enfranchises about 4·1 per cent. of the population, is the holding of land assessed at Rs. 32 land revenue (in certain areas Rs. 16) or the occupation of a house or building of the annual rental of Rs. 120 in Bombay City, of Rs. 60 in Karachi, and Rs. 36 in other urban areas.

Proposals of the Bombay Government.

111. The local Government propose to reduce the land revenue qualification from Rs. 32 to Rs. 8 (in certain areas from Rs. 16 to Rs. 4) and to halve the existing urban property qualification. Provision will be made for the enfranchisement of the *haris* or tenants in Sind, who are at present not entitled to vote except in those cases where their tenancies are of a permanent character. It is also proposed that in the case of women, the land revenue qualification should be reduced to Rs. 4.

112. It is anticipated that in this manner the total electorate will be increased to about 2,888,948, or 13·25 per cent. of the total population. The urban electorate will be about 20 per cent. of the urban population and the rural electorate 7·9 per cent. of the rural population. It is estimated that of the total electorate about 150,000 will be women, 2,730,000 men. The following is a detailed analysis of the Local Government's proposals :—

——	Muslims.	Depressed Classes.	Other Non-Muslims.	Total.	Percentage of Population.
1. Land Revenue qualification of Rs. 8 ..	169,220 (6·10 per cent.).	39,399	1,139,754	1,348,373	7·94
2. Halving of House-rent qualification in urban areas.	138,829 (12·63 per cent.).	23,065	495,654	895,309	18·55
Total of 1 and 2 ..	308,049 (6·97 per cent.).	62,464 (3·56 per cent.).	1,635,408 (10·45 per cent.).	2,243,682	10·29
3. No. of women who would be enfranchised if Land Revenue assessment qualification is reduced to Rs. 4.	—	—	—	117,321	1·27
4. *Haris* in Sind	—	—	—	400,000	—
5. Income-tax Assessees	—	—	—	117,798	—
6. Military Service qualification	—	—	—	10,147	—
Total	—	—	—	2,888,948	13·25

(The statistics in the above table are taken from the Local Government's letter.)

The number of depressed class voters would be approximately 65,000.

A number of the individuals to be enfranchised under the income-tax qualification may be qualified under other heads.

As figures of voters under heads 1 and 2 are not available and so have not been included in the above, for Bombay City and Larkana, it seems probable that the total of 2,888,948 to be enfranchised may prove an underestimate.

Proposals of the Bombay Provincial Committee.

113. The scheme suggested by the Bombay Provincial Committee would produce a total electorate of some 2,926,116 or 13·4 per cent. of the total population.

114. The most notable difference between the proposals of the Committee and the proposals of the local Government are the following :—

(*a*) The Committee would enfranchise women on the basis of literacy (producing 163,160), the Government by the reduction of the land revenue qualification to Rs. 4 (producing 150,000).

(*b*) The Committee would enfranchise approximately 300,000 of the depressed classes by applying a system of household franchise to the depressed classes only.

115. The details of the Committee's scheme are as follow :—

——	Presidency proper.	Sind.	Total.
1. Rs. 8 land revenue qualification	1,087,723	115,875	1,203,598
2. Halving of house rent qualification	691,970	107,388	799,358
3. *Haris* in Sind	—	400,000	400,000
4. Military qualification	9,000	1,000	10,000
5. Women literates (1931 census) ..	144,255	18,905	163,160
6. Depressed classes	*283,000	*17,000	*300,000
7. Income-tax assessees	45,000	5,000	†50,000
Total	2,260,948	665,168	2,926,116

Percentage of voters to total population (including Sind)	13·4
Percentage of voters in the Presidency Proper	12·6
Percentage of voters in Sind	17·1

* This rough estimate is derived from the depressed class population by allowing a rough average of six persons per house.

† The actual number of income-tax payers is about 118,000 (local Government's figure 117,798). The figure given allows for the probability that most of them will be qualified under other heads.

116. The local Government and the Committee are emphatic that their proposals produce a reasonably representative electorate ; that a further reduction to Rs. 4 in the land revenue assessment would not bring in any new class of the population and that an electorate of approximately the size suggested (13·25 per cent) is definitely the maximum administratively manageable.

117. The unenfranchised adult males number nearly 4 millions but of these about 1 million belong to the depressed classes for whom special representation is proposed ; allowance for the members of joint families would account for a large number, and the residue of about 1 million entirely unenfranchised and unrepresented males would consist of small landholders and those agricultural and other labourers who possess only small holdings or no holdings at all.

Our proposals.

118. Our first objection to the Bombay Government's scheme is that it does little to correct the existing disproportion between the urban and rural electorates. We asked the local Government to consider the reduction of the land revenue qualification from Rs. 8 to Rs. 4 in the case of men, but they reported that the result would be to increase the total electorate to nearly 4 millions or 18 per cent. of the population, which they consider to be administratively unmanageable. We have considered also an alternative suggestion to reduce the land revenue qualification to Rs. 6, but even this would add 400,000 revenue payers to the electoral roll, and having regard to the additions we feel bound to make in respect of women and men with the literacy qualification, the total electorate would again become unmanageable. We are compelled therefore to accept the local Government's proposal regarding the land revenue qualification.

119. In the second place, we regard as unsuitable the local Government's proposal to reduce the land revenue qualification from Rs. 8 to Rs. 4 in the case of women, and it would in fact add only 150,000 women to the electoral roll. We should prefer to follow the same course as in other provinces, and add to the roll the wives of men possessing the property qualifications prescribed for the present council and women who are literate. Allowing for some overlapping between the two classes of women, these two qualifications should produce an electoral roll of about 750,000 women.

120. In any case, we would introduce the literacy qualification of the upper primary standard for men in Bombay as for other provinces. This provision will lead to an automatic expansion of the electoral roll, which will in turn tend to correct some of the deficiencies of the Bombay scheme as it stands.

121. We also add 105,000 persons to the roll in order to bring the depressed classes up to 10 per cent. in accordance with the proposals in Chapter X.

122. The total electorate for the Bombay Presidency under our proposals would be composed approximately as follows :—

Land revenue qualification	1,348,373
House rent qualification in towns	895,309
Haris in Sind..	400,000
Income tax assessees	117,798
Military service qualification	10,147
Additional depressed classes	105,000
Upper Primary Education Standard, say..	100,000
Women	750,000
	3,726,627

123. Women would thus form 20 per cent. of the total electorate.

124. The electorate we propose is considerably larger than that proposed by the local Government, but in view of the large proportion of the urban element, we think it should be administratively possible to poll it. Excluding Sind, the percentage of voters to total population is only 13.

III.—BENGAL.

Statistics.

Population (1931).	Male.	Female.	Total.
Total	26,041,698	24,072,304	50,114,002
Muslim	14,200,142	13,297,482	27,497,624
Hindu	11,299,914	10,270,493	21,570,407
Europeans	13,110	7,785	20,895
Anglo-Indians	14,182	13,391	27,573
Indian Christians	67,184	62,528	129,712
Others	447,166	420,625	867,791

Area—77,521 square miles.
No of districts—28.
Total urban population—3,684,330.
Total rural population—46,429,672.
Present electorate—1,331,803.
Percentage of total population at present enfranchised—2·6.
(Urban 5 ; rural 2·3.)

Present Qualifications.

125. The present qualifications based on payment of cess and chaukidari and municipal tax produce an electorate of 1,331,803, or 2·6 per cent. of the total population.

Proposals of the Bengal Government.

126. The local Government favour an increase of this electorate to 7½ per cent. of the population. They say that if the Franchise Committee would agree to limit the franchise to 7½ per cent. it would be both desirable and possible to continue the existing system of direct elections. But they add that if the Committee insist on enfranchising more than 7½ per cent. of the population, then recourse to an indirect system would be inevitable, because it would be physically impossible or too expensive for candidates to try to get in touch with such huge electorates. They consider that it will be possible to make arrangements for polling an electorate of 5,625,000 or 11·2 per cent. of population, on the presumption that not more than 80 per cent. of the voters on the roll would poll. They remark that franchise qualifications based on payment of union rates or chaukidari taxes in mufassal areas and of municipal rates in municipal areas can be used to enfranchise either (*a*) 10 per cent. of the population, or (*b*) 11·2 per cent.—the latter being the figure which they regard as the maximum administratively manageable. But their views are not very definite and they add, "the total number of ratepayers in rural areas is at least 14·4 per cent. of population, in urban areas excluding Calcutta, 16·74 per cent. of the population, and in rural and urban areas, excluding Calcutta and Darjeeling, 14·52 per cent. of the population. By varying the amount payable for a legislative qualification the percentage can be adjusted as required."

127. An electorate of 11·2 per cent. would enfranchise approximately 393,750 women (0·7 of the total population). No satisfactory statistics are available of the number of depressed classes who would come on the electoral roll. The local Government are prepared to consider special labour representation for certain industrial areas through the group system.

Proposals of the Bengal Provincial Committee.

128. The Provincial Committee by a majority favour the extension of the direct vote as far as is administratively possible and make on compromise the following unanimous recommendation :—

> "The direct vote should be conferred on all persons who pay As. 12 local tax or rate or over. But if it is decided by the Indian Franchise Committee that the number thus enfranchised is inadequate, then, and in these circumstances only, the Committee consider that an indirect system of group voting should be resorted to."

[The effect of acceptance of the rate of tax in question would be to enfranchise 10 per cent. of the total population.]

129. The Committee are divided as to the nature of the indirect system to be adopted in the event of a further extension of the electorate being thought desirable. Eight against six favour the universal indirect system and ten against three are opposed to the combined direct and indirect system.

130. The approximate percentage of women who would be enfranchised under the Committee's proposal is 0·63 of the total population, say 315,000.

131. No estimate is possible of the extent to which the depressed classes will be enfranchised under the Committee's scheme.

132. The Committee are unanimously of opinion that if 10 per cent. of the population are directly enfranchised on the basis shown above, women and labour will fail to secure direct representation, and the majority (eight to two) think the same is true of the depressed classes.

133. It has not been possible to obtain any very clear indication from Bengal of the categories of the population who would be left without representation under the above schemes. The Government of Bengal remark that they would, in general, be the poorest classes. In addition, it seems clear that the percentage of women who would be enfranchised is disproportionately small; the position in regard to the depressed classes is obscure; and while industrial labour in Bengal appears to number over 1,000,000 workers, the local Government have no very positive proposals for dealing with them beyond an offer to consider the possibilities of the group system.

134. The situation would clearly be further aggravated were the Bengal Government's figure of 7·5 per cent. to be accepted in preference to the 11·2 per cent. which they regard as the maximum administratively manageable.

Our proposals.

135. During our visit to Bengal, the local Government were much preoccupied, and we have been unable to obtain from them the same measure of assistance that has been afforded by most other administrations. The Bengal Provincial Committee were originally for the most part in favour of universal adult suffrage by the indirect method—an expedient which we have found ourselves unable to accept for the reasons given in Chapter III. of our Report. We are convinced that the Committee, like the other advocates of this scheme, underestimated the discontent which would be caused by the withdrawal of the direct franchise from those who at present enjoy it. Nor are we convinced of the necessity in Bengal of supplementing the direct system of voting by an indirect system, which is apparently what the local Government contemplate in the event of the franchise being extended to more than 7½ per cent. of the

population. We have set forth the general objections to this scheme in Chapter IV of our Report, and the reasons given by the Bengal Government do not seem to us to outweigh those objections or to justify the adoption of this scheme in Bengal. The local Government themselves admit that it would be possible to make arrangements for polling an electorate of 5,625,000, or 11·2 per cent. of the population on the presumption that not more than 80 per cent. of the voters on the roll would poll. On past experience it seems likely that during the first few years of the new constitution not more than two-thirds of the electors on the roll would go to the poll, and on this ground alone the local Government's estimate of the maximum electorate administratively manageable could be considerably raised. They have also informed us that 3,000 persons would be available who would be suitable to act as presiding officers, and even on the assumption which they have made that each presiding officer could deal with only 750 voters per day, an electorate of over 9 millions could be polled in four days without difficulty. As a matter of fact, if Bengal adopt the simplified system of polling which we recommend and which has found favour in other provinces, we have little doubt that the average number of registered electors to be dealt with at each polling station could be raised to 1,000. We do not therefore consider that it is necessary on administrative grounds to restrict enfranchisement to 7½ per cent. of the population, nor can we accept the local Government's contention that with an electorate exceeding this limit, "recourse to an indirect system would be inevitable because it would be physically impossible or too expensive for candidates to try to get in touch with such huge electorates." An enlargement of the Councils is an essential consequence of our proposals for enlarging the electorate, and, assuming the retention as a general rule of single member constituencies, there is no reason to suppose that they will, with an increased electorate, be larger or more unwieldy than they are at present. For all these reasons, we are unable to accept a restriction of the direct electorate to 7½ per cent. in Bengal.

136. We are however placed in a position of some difficulty by the fact that the local Government have furnished us with no scheme even for the restricted franchise which they propose. We gather from their reports that the total number of ratepayers in rural and urban areas excluding Calcutta and Darjeeling is 14½ per cent. of the total population or just over 7 million persons. No information is given as to the number of these who would be women, but adopting the provisions for women's suffrage which we propose in other provinces, the wives of men possessing the property qualifications prescribed for the present Council would number some 800,000 and the 1931 Census returns show that there are 377,390 literate adult women in Bengal. Provision would also be necessary for Calcutta and Darjeeling regarding which no proposals have been made and no information vouchsafed by the local Government. A franchise

covering the existing ratepayers to local bodies with provision for about 1 million women, would therefore produce an electorate numbering considerably over 8 millions or more than 16 per cent. of the population. We therefore recommend that the Bengal Government should now proceed with the help of the information available in our report and in the reports of other local Governments, to draw up a detailed franchise scheme for the province, based on the payment of rates and taxes to local bodies with the addition of the upper primary educational qualification for men, and with the provisions for women's suffrage which we have proposed for other provinces. An addition must also be made if necessary in order to bring the depressed class total up to 10 per cent. of their population in accordance with the proposals made in Chapter X. It seems probable however that in parts of Bengal the depressed classes will form a considerable proportion of the electorate created by the ordinary qualifications.

It has been represented that the adoption of the literacy qualification in Bengal may result in bringing on to the electoral roll an unduly large proportion of women, particularly in non-Muhammadan constituencies. We think it is unlikely that all the women possessing the census literacy qualification will apply for admission to the roll, at any rate during the early years of the new constitution, but the matter should receive the consideration of the local Government.

137. The local Government informed us during our visit to Calcutta that it was their intention that urban areas should be grouped into constituencies and kept separate from the rural areas which should have their own constituencies. We have received no further details of this scheme, but we have no doubt that in working it out geographical and other considerations will receive due weight. It seems possible that in some parts of the province, urban constituencies of this kind could only be formed by uniting a number of scattered towns having no real community of interest, particularly if communal electorates are maintained. This matter should form the subject of consideration at a later stage of the investigation.

IV.—THE UNITED PROVINCES.

Statistics.

Population (1931).	Male.	Female.	Total.
Total	25,445,006	22,963,757	48,408,763
Muslim	3,780,453	3,401,474	7,181,927
Hindu	21,488,425	19,417,161	40,905,586
Europeans	16,861	5,182	22,043
Anglo-Indians	5,864	5,399	11,263
Indian Christians	88,201	82,015	170,216
Others	65,202	52,526	117,728

Area—106,248 square miles.
No. of districts—48.
Total urban population—5,424,621.
Total rural population—42,984,142.
Present electorate—1,646,290.
Percentage of total population at present enfranchised—3·4.
(Urban 10 per cent. ; rural 3·6 per cent.)

Local Government's proposals.

138. The basic qualification of the existing franchise in rural areas is land revenue assessment of Rs. 15 and a rental payment of Rs. 50. It is proposed to reduce the land revenue qualification to Rs. 5 and the rental qualification to Rs. 10. It is further proposed to reduce the rental qualification in urban areas, which is at present Rs. 36 per annum, to Rs. 24.

139. The effect of these reductions would be to increase the rural electorate from 3·6 per cent. to approximately 13·5 per cent. (a figure which would be substantially increased if it is decided to enfranchise women on the present voting qualifications of their husbands) and the urban electorate from an existing 10 per cent. to 15 per cent. (or if women are included, approximately 23 per cent.). The total electorate contemplated by the local Government is apparently between 13·9 per cent. and 15·6 per cent. of the total population, its size depending on whether or not it is decided to enfranchise the wives of men possessing the property qualifications prescribed for the present council.

140. The franchise proposed will give the vote to 414,000 women in rural constituencies on their own qualifications. In addition, it would be possible to enfranchise 128,000 women by introducing a literacy qualification or alternatively to enfranchise approximately an additional 1 million in rural constituencies if the wives were enfranchised of those men who are entitled to vote under the present council qualifications. Finally, the local Government are prepared to reserve five seats in the provincial council for women.

141. The number of the depressed classes enfranchised in their own right would be 644,000 or 1·5 per cent. of the population in rural areas.

142. The number of factory employees enfranchised may be taken as about 50,000. In addition, the Government would create one industrial constituency for the Cawnpore area and would reserve one seat for trade unions, subject to certain qualifications.

143. The number of enfranchised tenants-in-chief (520,000 sub-tenants in rural constituencies have rights as tenants-in-chief) will be 11·3 per cent. of the total population in rural constituencies

or 4,968,000. The reduction of the revenue qualification to Rs. 5 will enfranchise as landholders a further proportion of 2·2 per cent. or another 1 million. Tenants-in-chief (including the 520,000 who are also sub-tenants) and landholders will thus between them number 6,200,000, or 12·8 per cent. of the total population.

144. The unenfranchised residuum of adults will number 17½ millions or 36 per cent. of the total population in rural constituencies. It will be composed of landless labourers, village artisans and dependants. Landless labourers number 8 per cent. (or just under 4 millions) of the total population in rural constituencies. The local Government remark that they include " the adult relatives of all tenants and landholders in joint families and holdings, most of the backward and depressed classes and village artisans. They will be sufficiently represented by the tenant vote and by the special arrangements that are proposed for giving the depressed classes a certain number of seats in the legislative council."

Views of the Provincial Committee.

145. The Committee consider that 7 millions is approximately the maximum electorate which is administratively manageable on the basis of a one day poll for Hindus and one day for Muslims. They are opposed to any longer period. They recommend an electorate of 7,200,000 based on the following qualifications :—

(*a*) Rent of Rs. 10 and above.

(*b*) Land revenue of Rs. 5 and above.

(*c*) Enfranchisement of wives of those electors qualified as voters for the provincial legislative council under the present property qualification.

(*d*) Members of joint families who hold the minimum qualifications, provided their names are recorded in the village papers.

The resultant electorate is divided as follows :—

Rural constituencies : 6,200,000 (of whom 500,000 are Muslims).

Certain urban constituencies (adult suffrage) : 1 million (of whom 380,000 are Muslims).

146. As the percentage of Muslim and non-Muslim voters satisfactorily reflects the proportion of Muslims and non-Muslims to the total rural population, there is no need to prescribe different qualifications for them.

147. The above scheme would apparently enfranchise at least 1,878,000 women. The Committee would reserve five seats for women in the legislature, apart from any they might win in open contest.

148. No estimate is possible of its effects on the depressed classes whom, however, applying the criterion of untouchability, the majority of the Committee estimate at some 581,000 only.

149. For labour, the Committee would enfranchise the existing factory workers, subject to their being 21, drawing not less than Rs. 10 per mensem and having been in regular employ for the preceding six months. This would produce 50,000 voters. In addition, two labour constituencies, one for operatives living at Cawnpore, and one for registered and representative trade unions would be created.

150. The unenfranchised residuum will consist chiefly of the following classes :—

(*a*) Payers of rent and revenue below the prescribed minimum;
(*b*) Sub-tenants who are not tenants-in-chief ;
(*c*) Village artisans and shopkeepers ;
(*d*) Landless labourers ;
(*e*) Dependants.

151. The Committee, however, are of opinion that " while it would have been desirable to extend the franchise still further had the polling machinery so permitted, there is no class of people whose interest will be completely neglected in our scheme. The main interests of the rural areas are those connected with the landlord and the tenant ; and their qualifications have been so much lowered as to include a substantial section of persons on the lowest rung of the ladder."

152. We have ascertained from the Government of the United Provinces that the electorate finally recommended by them amounts to 7,642,000, or rather over 15·7 per cent. of the population. It is composed as follows :—

Rural Electorate	6,000,000
(Including 506,000 Muslims, 644,000 depressed classes, or about 10 per cent. of their estimated total population and 414,000 women enfranchised in right of property.)	
Wives of men possessing the property qualifications prescribed for the existing Council	1,000,000
Urban	397,000
(Existing electorate 150,000. Reduction of rental qualification in existing urban constituencies 60,000 ; and in urban areas now included in the rural vote 87,000. Wives of existing Council voters 100,000.)	
Literate women	128,000
Factory Electorate..	50,000
	7,575,000

The total women's vote on this basis would be 1,642,000.

153. The local Government indicate that allowance must be made for much overlapping in the women's qualifications, and add that they believe that of the total female electorate proposed at least 80 per cent. will not attempt to go to the polls (the percentage at the Council elections hitherto held have been three, ten and two). They therefore consider that the real electorate on the above basis will not exceed 6,500,000 and will be manageable.

Our proposals.

154. The local Government's proposals are the result of much consideration and discussion with us during two visits to Lucknow. The figures are based on detailed enquiries in 1,800 typical villages situated in all parts of the province, and it is claimed that they represent with a fair degree of accuracy the conditions of the whole. As elsewhere, we would add the upper primary educational qualification for the men, but in view of the probable overlapping of the figures relating to women, it is not necessary to increase the total on this account. The local Government's scheme makes adequate provision for the depressed classes and we are prepared to accept it as it stands.

V.—THE PUNJAB.

Statistics.

Population (1931).	Male.	Female.	Total.
Total	12,880,510	10,700,342	23,580,852
Muslim	7,241,612	6,090,848	13,332,460
Hindu	3,465,534	2,863,054	6,328,588
Sikh	1,703,584	1,360,560	3,064,144
Europeans	14,358	4,748	19,106
Anglo-Indians	1,825	1,170	2,995
Indian Christians	213,607	178,537	392,144
Others	239,990	201,425	441,415

Area—99,200 square miles.
No. of districts—29.
Total urban population—3,067,464.
Total rural population—20,513,388.
Present electorate—745,000.

Percentage of total population at present enfranchised : 3·1 per cent. (7·5 per cent. of urban, 2·8 per cent. of rural population).

Existing qualifications.

155. The existing franchise is based on the payment of land revenue of Rs. 25 and upwards or the holding as a tenant of more than 24 acres irrigated or 48 acres unirrigated. The urban vote is based substantially on income-tax and house rent qualifications.

Proposals of the local Government.

156. The local Government propose to reduce the land revenue qualification to Rs. 5 and the minimum area of a tenancy holding to six acres irrigated or 12 acres unirrigated. They are also prepared to enfranchise all village servants paying the *haisiyat* or profession tax and those village shopkeepers and artisans who pay a *haisiyat* tax not below the minimum land revenue qualification. In the towns, it is proposed, if necessary, to lower the existing house rent qualification, in order to produce an electorate equivalent to approximately 10 per cent. of the population. The proposals may be set forth as follows:—

Qualification.	Existing electorate.	Proposed electorate.
Landowners	601,000	1,398,000
Tenants	—	407,000
Other rural voters	—	251,000
Total rural voters ..	601,000	2,056,000
Municipal voters	144,000	225,000
	745,000	2,281,000

157. No women would be enfranchised except those qualified on the basis prescribed for men. The number of women voters under the local Government's proposal would be about 101,000. No special arrangements are proposed to secure the presence of women in the legislature.

158. The Government are of the opinion that the enfranchisement of the tenant will give the vote to a considerable number of the depressed classes. They, therefore, propose no special arrangements for the latter.

159. In the case of labour, they are prepared to arrange for one seat to which election should be by a special electorate composed of the factory population receiving wages above a certain figure and employed continuously for a certain minimum time.

160. In the electorate proposed the existing disparity between the enfranchisement of the urban and the rural population would disappear. There would be an unenfranchised residuum of approximately 9 millions of whom about two-fifths would be women. The

local Government emphasise that the payers of revenue enfranchised under their proposal "represent a much larger number of adult persons, because during a man's lifetime not only his wife, but also his sons, even if adult, pay no land revenue. It would not be far from the mark to assume that each enfranchised revenue payer and some of those proposed to be enfranchised as tenants, represent between three and four unenfranchised adults." "If each landowner represents only two adult males besides himself, these account for 2,500,000; and the tenant voters may similarly account for half a million more. This will leave a male unenfranchised residuum of 1,500,000, belonging to the poorer classes, and including the large floating population of beggars and vagrants which alone exceeds 500,000."

161. It may be added, as a matter of special interest in the Punjab, that of the 1,398,000 landholders enfranchised under the local Government's proposal, about 238,000 belong to classes other than agricultural tribes. Of the 407,000 tenants to be enfranchised, about half belong to non-agricultural tribes, which will also include the great majority of those who will be admitted to the electorate under other qualifications. It is estimated that the total number of members of non-agricultural tribes enfranchised under the local Government's scheme will be 641,000.

Provincial Committee's proposals.

162. Total proposed electorate—2,745,000 (or 11·7 per cent. of the population) as compared with an existing electorate of 745,000 (or 3·1 per cent. of population).

Rural.	
(*a*) Reduction of land revenue to Rs. 5	1,398,000 Landowners.
(*b*) Reduction of qualifying tenancy holding to 6 acres wet or 12 acres dry	407,000 Tenants.
(*c*) Reduction of house-rent and income-tax qualifications	50,000
(*d*) Enfranchisement of wives and widows of existing electors for the Provincial Council	376,000
(*e*) Voters other than landowners on the present register	251,000
Urban.	
(*f*) Wives and widows (92,000) and lowered income-tax and house qualification ..	119,000
(*g*) Existing municipal voters	144,000
Total ..	2,745,000 (11·7%)

163. Under the Committee's scheme, at least 568,000 women would secure the vote (98,000 directly qualified by property in rural, and some 2,000 in urban areas; 468,000 wives and widows in urban and rural areas).

164. No special proposals are made for dealing with the depressed classes, though the Committee remark "that a very considerable number of tenants and persons holding a military qualification from the non-combatant branches of the service will belong to this class."

165. The committee are prepared to recommend three labour seats, two to represent unorganised urban labour through special constituencies and one to represent the registered trade unions.

166. The qualifications proposed remedy the existing disparity between urban and rural areas.

167. The Committee's proposal produces a fairly substantial female electorate (568,000), and a degree of representation (641,000 out of 2,106,000 male voters) for persons other than members of agricultural tribes, an unknown percentage of whom are likely to belong to the depressed classes. For industrial labour they are prepared to provide special representation in the legislature. They urge in respect of the unenfranchised residuum of 4,500,000 male voters that each voter on the landowner's qualification may be taken to represent on an average at least two adult males besides himself; that each of the 407,000 tenants proposed to be enfranchised represents on an average from one to two sons, say a further 610,000, and that therefore out of the 4,500,000 males not directly enfranchised, 3,500,000 are indirectly enfranchised through the heads of their families.

Our proposals.

168. The Punjab Government's scheme does not, in our view, make sufficient provision for women, and we would add to the women's electorate the wives of men possessing the property qualifications prescribed for the existing Council and the literate women numbering approximately 350,000 and 85,000 respectively.

169. We would also add the men possessing the upper primary educational qualification as in other provinces. The total electorate so produced would be about 2,716,000 and an addition has to be made on account of the provision proposed in Chapter X for bringing the depressed classes up to 10 per cent. of their population strength. We therefore estimate the total at 2,800,000 of whom 2,350,000

would be men and 450,000 women (making the usual allowance for overlapping among the women's categories). We accept this as a suitable ratio for the Punjab between men and women and prefer it to the Punjab Committee's scheme, which appears to make no provision for the unmarried woman not possessing the property qualification.

170. It is, however, a most serious defect of the Punjab Government's scheme that only about 25 per cent. of the electorate will consist of members of non-agricultural tribes, whereas the non-agricultural tribes form about half the population of the province, There was apparently some difficulty in compiling this information and we obtained it only a few days before we completed our report, when it was too late to discuss the matter further with the local Government. We feel convinced, however, that its significance is such as to necessitate further consideration of the whole scheme. The Punjab Land Alienation Act confers great advantages, social and economic, on the members of agricultural tribes, and it would not be right to give them in addition the political predominance which they would gain if they formed three quarters of the electorate. We recognise that the non-agricultural tribes contain a considerable element of the depressed classes and landless labourers who would not obtain the vote under any franchise system based on property and literacy qualifications, but even so it should be possible to do more than has hitherto been attempted to correct the disparity between the agricultural and the non-agricultural tribes. The most obvious remedy would seem to be an extension of the *haisiyat* or profession tax to all payers and not merely to those who pay Rs. 5. Any further extension would apparently require legislation. Other measures have also been suggested on which we can express no opinion at present. If it is found impossible to secure a substantial increase in the number of members of non-agricultural tribes on the electoral roll, it may be necessary to consider a reduction in the voting strength of the agricultural tribes. An increase in the land revenue qualification from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 would result in a reduction in the number of landowners on the roll by half a million, without disturbing the communal proportions produced by the local Government's scheme. We should regret any such curtailment of the enfranchisement of the agricultural classes, but if no other means can be found for reducing the disparity between them and the non-agriculturists, the possibility will have to be faced. The whole question requires further examination by the local Government. It is not unlikely that the addition of the upper primary standard will be of assistance in increasing the proportion of the non-agricultural tribes while the measures we propose in Chapter X in order to bring the depressed classes up to 10 per cent. of their population strength will tend in the same direction.

VI.—BIHAR AND ORISSA.

Statistics.

Population (1931).	Male.	Female.	Total.
Total	18,794,138	18,883,438	37,677,576
Muslim	2,112,814	2,151,976	4,264,790
Hindu	15,493,257	15,518,217	31,011,474
Europeans	3,386	2,186	5,572
Anglo-Indians	3,395	3,132	6,527
Indian Christians	162,988	166,124	329,112
Others	1,018,298	1,041,803	2,060,101

Area—83,054 square miles.
No. of districts—21.
Total urban population—1,653,837.
Total rural population—36,023,739.
Present electorate—418,324.

Percentage of total population at present enfranchised—1·1 per cent. (5 per cent. urban, 1 per cent. rural population).

Existing qualifications.

171. The existing franchise is based on the payment of revenue, rent or cess in rural areas and of municipal tax in urban areas. The rates vary in different parts of the province and produce an electorate of only 1·1 per cent. of the total population, the lowest percentage in India.

Proposals of local Government.

172. The local Government propose to substitute for the varying rates in force in rural areas the payment of chaukidari tax, which at the minimum rate of six annas per annum would enfranchise all householders except the very poorest and would produce a rural electorate of 2,741,012 (2,695,755 males and 45,257 females). In urban areas they would enfranchise all persons paying Re. 1-8-0 municipal tax. This would bring in approximately 145,000 voters, of whom only about 1,000 are women. The total electorate, rural and urban, would thus be 2,880,000, or about 7·6 per cent. of the total population. In addition, they would create two industrial constituencies for labour, and possibly prescribe special franchise qualifications for certain industrial areas should it be impossible to bring these into the two constituencies. The main elements of the population which would on these bases be at an appreciable disadvantage in the matter of enfranchisement would be women and landless labourers. The depressed classes would also be at a disadvantage as compared with the cultivator class in rural areas.

173. In view, however, of the limited size of the existing electorate, the local Government are doubtful of their ability to handle an electorate more than seven times as large. They suggest as an alternative a minimum payment in rural areas of Re. 1 as chaukidari tax. This would bring in a rural electorate of only 1,331,076 of whom 18,817 would be women (statistics subsequently received from the Provincial Committee suggest that the number of persons paying chaukidari tax of Re. 1 and above is in fact 1,411,452, of whom 19,549 are women). In urban areas the qualification would be fixed at Re. 1-8-0 municipal tax. The special arrangements for labour referred to in the preceding paragraph would be retained.

174. The general effect of this scheme would be to enfranchise between 4 and 5 per cent. of the population. " On this basis only a negligible proportion of the depressed class would probably be enfranchised in the rural area."

175. As an alternative to the proposals set out above, the local Government would be willing to adopt a system of indirect election in rural areas, the chaukidari village being adopted as the unit and each village electing such number of secondary electors as may be assigned to it on a population basis. The local Government consider that, if this system is adopted, a total electorate of 1,100,000 to 1,200,000 secondary voters, or roughly three times the existing electorate, is the maximum which should be contemplated. No special arrangements for labour would be proposed if this system were adopted.

Proposals of the Provincial Franchise Committee.

176. A majority of the Provincial Committee are definitely in favour of limiting the enlargement of the electorate to 5 per cent. of the total population. This represents their considered opinion in the light of discussion with the Indian Franchise Committee and of an investigation of the administrative manageability of electorates of various sizes. The acceptance of their proposals would involve an increase of the electoral roll in the rural areas from 357,000 to about 1,750,000. It would be mainly effected by adopting the payment of chaukidari tax of Re. 1 and upwards as the basis of the franchise qualification in 18 districts and by lowering the existing qualifications in the three remaining districts.

177. The franchise in urban areas has already been extended to 5 per cent. of the total urban population. A majority of the members are not in favour of any further increase. If an increase to 10 per cent. of the urban population were however desired, this could be achieved by the adoption of the main municipal franchise, viz., payment of at least Re. 1-8-0 as tax or fee as the basis of the franchise qualification in urban areas.

178. The Provincial Committee are prepared to create a special labour constituency for Jamshedpur (say 15,000 voters) and to frame one or more rural constituencies in such manner as to give a preponderance of votes to the colliery labourers in Chota Nagpur.

179. Under their proposals about .100,000 women would be enfranchised.

180. So far as can be judged, only about 1 per cent. of the depressed classes would come on the electoral roll.

181. The total electorate proposed would apparently number 1,750,000 + 15,000 = say 1,765,000, or about 4·6 per cent. of the population. On this basis the existing disparity between urban and rural would disappear. An increase of the urban electorate to 10 per cent. would produce a total electorate of, say, 1,908,000, or rather over 5 per cent. The disparity between the urban and rural electorates would be decreased from 5 : 1 to 10 : 5.

Our Proposals.

182. We recognise the special difficulties that exist in Bihar and Orissa owing to the lack of a revenue staff and the fact that their existing electorate is only a little over 1 per cent. of the total population. But we are not prepared to accept the proposal that the extension of the direct franchise should now be confined to between 4 and 5 per cent. of the population, nor do we think that the administrative difficulties in Bihar are such as to justify us in disregarding the general objections which we have pointed out in chapter IV to the combination of the direct with the indirect system of voting. In a province like Bihar and Orissa with a scanty, or in many parts non-existent, village staff, the difficulties of working the group system would be peculiarly great. As regards the provision of a polling staff, Bihar and Orissa, with 990 officers suitable for employment as presiding officers, should not find an electorate of 3 millions administratively unmanageable. We think, therefore, that in Bihar and Orissa the payment of *chaukidari* tax at the minimum rate of six annas a year should be adopted as the qualification for enfranchisement together with a corresponding rate of a municipal tax in urban areas designed to bring about 9 or 10 per cent. of the population on to the electoral roll. This proportion is lower than that which we have proposed for most other provinces, but in view of the fact already pointed out that only a little over 1 per cent. of the population is at present enfranchised, we refrain from suggesting a higher extension, except for the introduction of the upper primary examination test which we have proposed for general adoption. This will make little difference to the Bihar electoral roll for the present. The local Government's scheme would, however, bring in less than 50,000 women, a proportion which we must regard as wholly inadequate. We would add the wives of men possessing the property qualifications prescribed for the existing council

and literate women, numbering 280,000 and 77,000 respectively, which with an allowance for overlapping should result in the addition of about 300,000 women to the roll. It will also be necessary to make an addition which may be roughly estimated at 320,000 in order to bring the depressed classes up to 10 per cent. of their population strength as proposed in Chapter X. The total electorate would then number approximately 3,500,000, of whom 3,150,000 would be men and 350,000 women.

VII.—THE CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR.

Statistics.

Population (1931).	Male.	Female.	Total.
Total	7,761,818	7,745,905	15,507,723
Hindu	6,671,326	6,666,897	13,338,223
Muslim	358,900	323,954	682,854
Aboriginal	660,755	690,860	1,351,615
Europeans	3,782	1,293	5,075
Anglo-Indians	2,475	2,265	4,740
Indian Christians	21,645	22,129	43,774
Others	42,935	38,507	81,442

The total number of aboriginals is 3 millions, over half of whom were returned at the census as having adopted Hinduism. The figure here given represents the population of aboriginals following tribal religions.

Area—99,920 square miles.
No. of districts—19.
Total urban population—1,679,546.
Total rural population—13,828,177.
Present electorate—199,500.
Percentage of total population at present enfranchised—1·3.
Percentage of urban and rural—2·6 urban ; 1·0 rural.

Existing qualifications.

183. The Central Provinces has an existing electorate of only 199,500, which is absolutely the smallest in India, and forms only 1·3 per cent. of the total population. The present basic rates vary in different parts of the province but appear to connote a land revenue assessment of not less than Rs. 100 per annum, a rental of Rs. 30 to Rs. 50 or over, according to district ; and in urban areas a house rental of Rs. 36 or over or a *haisiyat* tax assessment of Rs. 200 or over.

Proposals of local Government.

184. The local Government propose a total electorate of about 1,550,000 or 10 per cent. of the population, which they regard as the maximum administratively manageable, to be secured under the following qualifications :—

(i) Payment of Rs. 10 or over as land revenue or rent.

(ii) In urban areas, payment of Rs. 12 house-rent per annum or the assessment to an equivalent *haisiyat* tax. The adoption of a Rs. 12 house-rent qualification will, it is stated, be equivalent to a rental payment of Rs. 10 in rural areas.

(iii) Educational qualification (primary certificate of the Educational Department held by all persons who have passed out of the 4th class in a primary vernacular school. 323,000 present holders, of whom under half adult. Of the adults some will be qualified under other heads. For adults who are literate but do not hold the primary certificate, a special examination of equivalent standard is proposed).

(iv) Village Office qualification (estimated to produce 50,000 voters, the village watchman, who is almost invariably of the depressed classes, being principally affected).

(v) Labour.—One seat to be allotted in the legislature, to be filled through registered trade unions.

185. Of the total electorate of about 1,550,000 proposed by the local Government, 70,000 would be women.

186. It is not clear to what extent the depressed classes (who on the basis of untouchability are stated in the 1931 census to number 2,965,490) would secure representation on the electoral roll. An analysis of four constituencies indicates that the proportion will be satisfactory in the Chhattisgarh division, but that elsewhere the voting strength of the depressed classes will be below their population basis.

187. Labour would be provided for partly through the seats proposed to be reserved for the depressed classes (who furnish the bulk of the labouring classes in the Central Provinces) and partly through the seat proposed to be reserved for labour represented through registered trade unions.

188. The local Government explain that the number of unenfranchised adult males would be over 2 millions, consisting mainly of the smaller tenants (paying less than Rs. 10 rent), tenants-at-will, agricultural labourers, and urban labourers earning less than Rs. 100 per annum. Sub-tenants would secure no representation as such. The local Government originally stated that it would be impossible further to enlarge the electorate which was already almost unmanageable ; that it would be necessary to reduce the rental qualifications from Rs. 10 to Rs. 2 in order to include the typical agricultural labourer ; that there was no real difference in interest between

the small tenant paying Rs. 5 and a slightly bigger man paying Rs. 10 ; and that no practical advantage would be gained by going one or two rupees below Rs. 10 ; that sub-tenants would generally be found to be recruited from the general body of tenants who would be adequately represented under their proposals ; and that a sufficient number of persons would be enfranchised under their proposals to secure adequate representation for lodgers in towns. Shortly before we signed our report, however, we received a further communication from the local Government in which they stated that an analysis of four typical constituencies indicated that the number of the voters enfranchised by a Rs. 10 qualification would be less than at first estimated, and it would probably be necessary to adopt a Rs. 7–8–0 qualification as the standard for the province, with possibly Rs. 5 for the more lightly assessed districts and perhaps Rs. 10 for districts assessed above the average. We had ourselves observed that the number of voters on a Rs. 10 basis in one of the Berar districts and in the Chhattisgarh division was unsatisfactorily small, and it is clear that the whole matter requires further investigation.

Proposals of Provincial Committee.

189. The Provincial Committee would apparently be prepared to increase the electorate to about 1,750,000 or 11·2 per cent. of the total population, on the following basis :—

(*a*) Property qualification :—

(*i*) In rural areas a minimum of Rs. 10 revenue or rent other than sub-rent (say, 1,350,000).

(*ii*) In urban areas owners or occupiers of property the rental value of which is taken for purposes of municipal taxation at Rs. 12 per annum in the poorer and Rs. 18 per annum in the richer municipal areas (200,000).

(In the few municipalities where the house rental valuation is not the basis of taxation, an equivalent *haisiyat* tax assessment would have to be worked out. This might be taken as some figure round about Rs. 160 per annum until the details have been examined.)

(*b*) Educational qualification—the same as proposed by the local Government (say 100,000).

(*c*) Enfranchisement of sub-tenants with a minimum sub-rent of Rs. 30 (or three times the absolute minimum). (The number will not apparently be large.)

(*d*) Enfranchising the wives of men with a property qualification higher than the ordinary. The figure to be fixed so that the approximate total female electorate from all sources will not exceed 300,000. In addition, the Committee are prepared to reserve five seats (in urban constituencies) for women in the legislature.

190. It is difficult to estimate precisely the electorate contemplated by the Central Provinces Committee. Their final recommendations indicate that they regard an electorate of 10 to 11 per cent. as the maximum administratively manageable and they recommend the acceptance of such a figure. The total of the figures above comes to almost 2 millions or say 13 per cent. It is probable that of the 300,000 women proposed to be enfranchised, some will be independently qualified among the 1,550,000 rent or revenue payers, and it is perhaps safe to assume that the total contemplated by the Central Provinces Committee does not exceed about 1,750,000.

191. The Committee's scheme provides for women five seats, and 300,000 voters and for the depressed classes a number of electors still to be ascertained. For labour it provides one seat and a certain amount of indirect representation through the depressed class seats. It would also bring in a certain number of sub-tenants. The number of adult males left unenfranchised is still considerable, but the Committee appear to share the views of the local Government on this subject.

Our proposals.

192. We are prepared to accept the local Government's proposals, so far as the male electorate is concerned subject to further examination of the rent and revenue standards for different parts of the province, and on the understanding that they produce an electorate of not less than 1,500,000. It will also be necessary to add probably 100,000 to the roll in order to bring the depressed classes up to 10 per cent. of their population strength as proposed in chapter X. But the local Government's scheme would bring in only one woman to every 20 men, and we regard this proportion as inadequate. Adding the wives of men possessing the property qualifications prescribed for the existing council (133,000) and the literate women (40,000), we should with the usual allowance for overlapping obtain about 150,000 women voters, and we are not satisfied that even this addition can be regarded as sufficient. The reason for this special difficulty in the Central Provinces is the smallness of the present electorate which is only 199,500, or 1·3 per cent. of the total population. If it is decided, in the case of the Central Provinces, to increase the number of voters for the Indian Federal Assembly above the strength of the present Council electorate, we suggest that the wives of voters for the Assembly should be placed on the electoral roll for the Provincial Council. It is unlikely that the number of women voters who would be obtained in this manner would exceed 350,000, and if this figure were reached, there would be four male electors to one woman elector.

VIII.—ASSAM.

Statistics.

Population (1931).	Male.	Female.	Total.
Total	4,537,206	4,085,045	8,622,251
Muslim	1,449,073	1,306,841	2,755,914
Hindu	2,616,644	2,315,116	4,931,760
Europeans	2,093	868	2,961
Anglo-Indians	349	209	558
Indian Christians	121,264	123,927	245,191
Others	347,783	338,084	685,867

Area—55,014 square miles.
Number of districts—12.
Total urban population—213,421.
Total rural population—8,408,830.
Present electorate—288,832.

Percentage of total population at present enfranchised—3·3.

[The average percentages of urban (1921) and rural (1921) population enfranchised were 9·5 per cent. and 3·7 per cent., respectively.]

Existing qualification.

193. The present qualification is Rs. 15 land tax in the Assam Valley, and Re. 1 chaukidari tax in Goalpara and the Surma Valley.

Proposals of the local Government.

194. The local Government are emphatically of opinion that the electorate should not be expanded beyond 10 per cent. of the population or treble the existing number.

195. Enquiry goes to show that in the five districts of the Assam Valley where payment of land revenue is the main qualification for the franchise, a payment of about Rs. 7-8-0 would produce an electorate of 10 per cent. of the population. Similarly, in the Surma Valley payment of about As. 8 chaukidari tax would give a similar electorate. In the Goalpara district in the Assam Valley, a lesser rate of payment of chaukidari tax might have to be fixed. In the five Assam Valley districts a qualification of Rs. 7-8-0 would bring on the rolls some 10 per cent. of the Hindu exterior castes, ex-tea-garden coolies, and backward tribes; and some 2·8 per cent. of women; in Goalpara, Cachar and Sylhet, approximately 11 per cent. and 0·82 per cent., respectively. A corresponding modification will be made in the franchise for the urban areas.

196. For presiding officers, the local Government are not prepared to go above an estimate of 500 voters a day in 400 polling stations, which means that with an electorate of 800,000 the elections would have to be spread over four days. Polling arrangements present special difficulties in Assam owing to the sparseness of the population and defective communications.

Views of the Provincial Committee.

197. The Provincial Committee would enfranchise 15 per cent. of the total population, say, 1,290,000 (a figure which would include about 40,000 women), by reduction of the qualifying amount of payment of land revenue or of chaukidari tax. They cannot indicate what precise reductions would be required in order to produce this result.

Our proposals.

198. In view of the administrative difficulties which are forcibly pointed out in the local Government's report, we are not prepared to press them to provide on a general franchise basis for more than 10 per cent. of the population which involves trebling the existing electorate. Even at present considerable difficulty is felt in carrying out the elections in Assam where they appear to involve more serious dislocation of ordinary administrative work than in any other province. The local Government's scheme appears to make adequate provision for the depressed classes. We desire, however, to make the usual provision for the admission to the roll of any person who holds a certificate of having passed out of the fourth class of a primary vernacular school or a corresponding standard. The local Government's scheme provides a very small addition to the woman's electorate, and here as usual, we would provide for the wives of men possessing the property qualifications prescribed for the existing council (192,000) and for literate women (40,000) which might be expected to bring a net total of 220,000 women on to the electoral roll which would thus consist of over 1 million persons, of whom about one-fifth would be women.

IX.—THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE.

Statistics.

Population (1931).	Male.	Female.	Total.
Total	1,315,818	1,109,258	2,425,076
Muslim	1,196,120	1,031,183	2,227,303
Hindu	84,358	58,619	142,977
Sikhs	26,284	16,226	42,510
Europeans	6,344	1,420	7,764
Anglo-Indians	92	58	150
Indian Christians	2,569	1,697	4,266
Others	51	55	106

Area—13,518 square miles.
No. of districts—5.
Total urban population—386,177.
Total rural population—2,038,899.
Present electorate—119,922.

199. The North-West Frontier Province is in a different position to the other provinces of India. Up to April, 1932, it was administered by a Chief Commissioner under the direction of His Excellency the Viceroy, and contained no legislative body of any kind. In April, 1932, it was converted into a Governor's province under the Government of India Act, 1919. The elections to the first Legislative Council were in progress during our visit to Peshawar in the early part of that month, and no final report on their working was available when our report was signed. In these circumstances it would be premature for us to formulate any final recommendations regarding the province, but it is understood that it is intended that it should be granted full responsible government at the same time as other provinces, and it is therefore necessary to set forth such material as is now available with the object of facilitating a decision when the time comes.

200. The basis of the existing franchise is that prescribed for district boards in rural areas and for municipalities in towns. The main element of the former is the payment of land revenue amounting to not less than Rs. 10 per annum or the holding as a tenant of land assessed to not less than Rs. 10 land revenue. In municipalities, it is the possession of moveable property valued at not less than Rs. 600 or the payment of not less than Rs. 4 as house rent. In municipalities persons who have passed the matriculation or equivalent examination are also entitled to vote. No women are entitled to vote. Final figures are not available, but on preliminary rolls 4·2 per cent. of the total population, 7·7 per cent. of the male population, and 15·5 per cent. of the adult male population are enfranchised in general constituencies. The urban franchise gives the vote to about 12 per cent. of the urban population, and the local Government does not think it necessary to increase the urban electrate. In rural areas, however, it proposes to lower the revenue and corresponding qualifications so as to bring in about 10 per cent. of the population, and it is generally agreed both by officials and by non-officials and also by the Provincial Franchise Committee that the enlargement of the electorate should proceed on the same lines as in the Punjab, of which the five settled districts of the North-West Frontier Province originally formed part.

201. It is generally agreed that it is unnecessary in the North-West Frontier Province to make any special arrangements for the representation of labour or the depressed classes.

202. As regards women's suffrage, the Chief Commissioner observed :—" Female suffrage is probably at present so unthinkable in public opinion as to be outside the scope of practical politics. Women do not generally hold property or pay taxes, and would therefore have to be enfranchised if at all through their civil condition, i.e., as wives, widows or daughters, unless some form of universal franchise limited by age were introduced. For the present the difficulty of providing female staff for *purdah* polling appears insuperable. The compilation of rolls including enquiries as to names would, anyhow in the first instance, involve considerable difficulties. The whole subject is one best left to local public opinion which even if largely male is not everywhere unsympathetic as is proved by the removal of the sex disqualification by many provincial legislatures." The Provincial Committee observed :— " In this province the sex disqualification continues and will continue until the Provincial Council removes it. There has, of course, so far been no opportunity to remove it. We agree with the Chief Commissioner that woman suffrage is foreign to male public opinion among the mass of Muslims in this province, and we do not think that it would be possible to introduce it at present, unless administrative arrangements can be made for enrolment and polling consistent with *purdah*, where it is observed. The majority of members are in favour of women suffrage in the abstract, but agree that practical obstacles are such as to render anything like its immediate introduction extremely difficult. The Hindu and Sikh members state that they would gladly see women suffrage introduced at once as far as their own community is concerned."

203. In principle we are in favour of the enfranchisement of women in the North-West Frontier Province on the same lines as elsewhere. The opinions quoted above indicate the special difficulties that exist, and it is noteworthy that in other provinces a lead in the matter has been given by the Legislative Councils, to which the decision was entrusted under the Government of India Act of 1919. The Legislative Council of the North-West Frontier Province has not yet had an opportunity of considering the question, which will doubtless come before it in due course. It is probable that all sex disqualifications will be abolished in the statement of fundamental rights under the new constitution, and it will eventually be for Parliament to decide in the light of the discussion in the Legislative Council and any other evidence of local feeling that may be forthcoming, whether special treatment should be accorded to the North-West Frontier Province in this matter. We discovered in the course of our discussions with the local Government and with the Provincial Committee and during our examination of witnesses that there is considerable public feeling that the province ought not to appear to be lagging behind the Punjab and the rest of India in this and other matters and it is probable that this feeling will grow in strength.

Summary of the Provincial Franchise Schemes.

203A. A brief summary of our provincial franchise schemes may be useful. The electorate in the different provinces under our proposals will contain the following elements :—

(1) men and women possessing the prescribed property qualifications ;

(2) men who have passed the upper primary or corresponding educational standard (paragraph 83) ;

(3) literate women [paragraph 215 (*a*)] ;

(4) wives of men who possess the property qualifications prescribed for the present councils [paragraph 215 (*b*)] ;

(5) members of such special constituencies as may be created for labour (paragraph 257) ;

(6) members of the depressed classes for whom special franchise qualifications may be prescribed (paragraph 315).

CHAPTER VIII.—WOMEN'S FRANCHISE AND REPRESENTATION.

204. In his letter of instructions, the Prime Minister stated that " His Majesty's Government attach special importance to the question of securing a more adequate enfranchisement of women than the existing system which applies to women the same qualification as to men, and has produced a women's electorate numbering less than one-twentieth of the total male electorate." The proportions of men and women enfranchised at present in the several provinces are shown in the following table :—

Madras	1 to 10
Bombay	1 to 19
Bengal	1 to 26
United Provinces	1 to 29
Punjab	1 to 29
Bihar and Orissa	1 to 62
Central Provinces	1 to 25
Assam	1 to 114

This result is mainly due to the fact that the existing qualification for the vote is a property qualification, and that the number of Indian women who own property in their own right is infinitesimal.

205. The Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference stated that " no system of franchise can be considered satisfactory or as likely to lead to good government where such a great disparity exists between the voting strength of the two sexes. We do not anticipate that the recommendations we have already made will reduce the disparity, nor do we think that they provide sufficiently for the enfranchisement of women. We feel, therefore, that special qualifications should be prescribed for women."

Proposals of the Statutory Commission.

206. The Statutory Commission, whose views as regards women's franchise were recommended to the consideration of the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference, after pointing out (Volume II, page 93) why " the enfranchisement of Indian women " on the same terms as men " produces very few women voters indeed," went on as follows :—

> " We desire to see a substantial increase in the present ratio of women to men voters. If this is not effected now, the situation will later on be reached when so large a proportion of adult men are on the register, and so few women, that a further extension to bring the number of women voters more nearly

to an equality (even if the Provincial Councils as then constituted proposed it) would necessitate the sudden admission of vast numbers of women with hardly any increase in the number of men. It is far better to proceed gradually and steadily, and a further step in developing women's suffrage in India should be taken now. Some qualification other than the present one is needed, and it is very difficult to suggest the most satisfactory method. It may perhaps be found possible to add to the present qualification two others, viz., (1) being the wife, over 25 years of age, of a man who has a property qualification to vote, and (2) being a widow over that age, whose husband at the time of his death was so qualified. In addition, the educational qualification should apply to women over 21 as well as to men. Many will be disposed to say that Indian wives and widows are so largely uneducated or living in seclusion that their enfranchisement to this extent is premature and extravagant. We do not think so. The beginning of a movement among certain Indian women, however comparatively few in number they may yet be, to grapple with problems which specially affect home and health and children is one of the most encouraging signs of Indian progress, and we believe that the movement would be strengthened by increasing the influence of women at elections."

The principle of equality.

207. Without exception the representatives of women's organisations and individual women witnesses demanded that the principle of equality between men and women should be the basis of the new Indian constitution. The representatives of the All-India Women's Conference insisted that this principle could only be applied in the franchise by the immediate adoption either of adult franchise or of a system of indirect election of all adults, and urged this solution upon us. We have already given our reasons for rejecting both these methods as neither practicable nor advisable at the present time. Like other bodies who have examined the problem, we have been driven to recognise that theoretic equality under a restricted franchise means in practice extreme inequality, and to consider by what system of what the Round Table Conference called " special qualifications " we can secure " a substantial increase in the present ratio of women to men voters."

Proposals for the enfranchisement of wives and widows.

208. In the preceding chapter we have set forth the general property and educational qualifications we propose. It has been urged upon us that we should enfranchise the wives and widows of all the men voters thus enfranchised, so securing approximate equality in numbers between men and women. One objection to

this course is that it provides a qualification for the married woman only and makes no provision for the unmarried. A second objection is that it would increase the electorate far beyond the limits of administrative possibility. The only way, indeed, whereby under a restricted franchise, equality in the number of men and women voters can be obtained is by reducing the number of men voters in order to increase the number of women voters. We have several times referred to the Prime Minister's instructions that under the new franchise " no important section of the community should lack the means of expressing its needs and its opinions." In earlier pages we have explained how our property and educational qualifications have been devised so as to secure, as far as it is practical, some representation for all the main categories of the population. If we were to raise the standard of these qualifications in order to admit more women voters without passing the limits of administrative practicability, we should simply be disfranchising certain elements of the population in order to give votes to the wives of men who already possess the vote. As the Statutory Commission foresaw, our only course is, while giving legal equality to men and women in the ordinary qualifications, to treat women as one of the main sections of the community, and to provide such special qualifications as will, in our judgment, secure them adequate representation during the next phase of the Indian reforms.

Women's desire for the vote.

209. Before considering what the proportion should be, there are two preliminary points which we have to discuss. The first is the question whether in fact large numbers of Indian women do want the vote to-day, and whether owing to the purdah system or other reasons, they would be deterred from exercising it. The second is the special arrangements which it will be desirable to make at the polling stations in order to help them to record their votes.

210. As regards the first question, in every province women, including some in strict purdah, came forward as witnesses, either representing organisations or individually, asking for an extension of the franchise, while there has been no expression of opinion to the contrary, written or oral, from the women themselves. It is however true that there is among Muslim men, especially in the north, a feeling against anything which may make a sudden breach in the purdah system. As to whether women will exercise the vote, it is argued that only a small percentage have exercised it, and that there is no reason to think that with a widening of the franchise, a larger proportion will come forward. On the other hand, there is considerable evidence to show that women are reluctant to vote while they are a small and conspicuous minority at the polling booths. So long as their numbers are negligible no candidate need trouble about

their political education, and they in their turn feel that their votes have no influence on the result. We are informed that in those places where women are enfranchised in large numbers for local boards, the percentage who poll differs little from that of men. For instance, at a recent municipal election in Madras over 60 per cent. of the women voters polled, whereas in 1930 only 14 per cent. voted in the elections for the provincial council. Furthermore, there is no doubt that there has been a political awakening among women in many parts of the country in the last few years. The purdah system may at first restrict the number of women who will go to the poll, but the Statutory Commission states that " the feeling against purdah is fast gaining ground."

Polling arrangements for women.

211. As regards the polling system, we have had every variety of opinion. Some have asked for separate purdah polling stations entirely staffed by women. Some have considered that it would suffice if polling stations had separate entrances and polling compartments for women and a woman assistant to help women voters. Some have repudiated the idea that any special arrangements should be made at all, and have urged that women should take their place in the ordinary voters' queue.

212. The question affects our problem in two ways; first, as to the special polling arrangements we recommend for women, and secondly, to what extent the possibility of providing such arrangements will in practice limit the number of women who can be polled. We recommend that where there is a need for separate polling booths with women presiding officers and women clerks, they shall be provided so far as is practicable. This is already the practice to some extent in more than one province. We recognise that it may only be possible in cities and large towns and that in smaller towns and rural areas it may be difficult to find a sufficient number of suitable women who are willing to undertake the duties. We consider, however, that it should be possible in most places to provide a separate entrance to the polling booth and one woman assistant. There will be difficulty in identifying women voters, especially where purdah is strictly observed, but usually a woman will be accompanied to the poll by her husband or other relative or neighbour who will be responsible for testifying to her identity. We trust that these difficulties will not in practice greatly limit the number of women who will go to the poll, since special arrangements can be made in the town and purdah is less strict in the villages. In any case, although the polling of a large number of women voters may add to the expense and complicate the electoral machinery, we do not consider that these are reasons for not providing an adequate enfranchisement of women.

Reasons for the adequate enfranchisement and representation of women.

213. Taking all these factors into account, we have reached two conclusions. The first is that it is necessary that an adequate number of women should be placed on the roll to compel candidates to consider their interests and opinions, to awaken political interest among women, and to make their votes an effective lever, particularly in providing reforms of special concern to women and children. The proportion we aim at is that the women voters should number about one-fifth of the whole, although owing to local conditions it may not be possible to reach this figure in every province. The second is that from two to five per cent. of the seats in the provincial councils should be reserved for women for the first ten years. Unless special provision is made for them, it seems improbable that more than a few, if any, women will secure election to the first legislatures, even with a larger women's electorate than we are able to propose, considering the prejudice which still exists in India, as in other countries, against women taking part in public life, and the difficulties in the way of a woman travelling about to canvass a constituency. We consider it essential that during the formative period of the constitution, there should be in the legislatures a number of women sufficient to express their views and make their influence felt.

214. The following is necessarily a very rough estimate of the number of women voters who will be placed on the roll under the property qualifications we propose :—

Province.	Number of women who would be admitted to the roll on the property qualification.	Men's electorate.	Ratio of men to women.
Madras	718,000	5,744,000	8 : 1
Bombay..	50,000	2,976,000	59 : 1
Bengal	500,000	6,500,000	13 : 1
United Provinces	414,000	6,000,000	14 : 1
Punjab	101,000	2,350,000	23 : 1
Bihar and Orissa	46,250	3,150,000	68 : 1
Central Provinces	70,000	1,660,000	24 : 1
Assam	30,000	820,000	27 : 1

No figures are available to show how many women would possess the proposed educational qualification, but it is clear that such a qualification would tend to increase the disparity between men and women voters, since in 1929, the latest year for which figures are available, 178,285 boys and 12,269 girls passed the upper primary standard.

Our proposals for the franchise.

215. It will be generally admitted that the number of women who would obtain the franchise on the property and educational qualifications which we have proposed would be quite inadequate. We therefore propose two further qualifications for women :—

(*a*) literacy ;

(*b*) being the wife of a voter possessing a certain property qualification.

(*a*) Literacy is defined for census purposes as ability to read and write a letter in any language. The names of all adult women who are recorded as literate in authoritative educational records should be placed on the electoral roll ; it would be necessary for other women to satisfy the officer in charge of the roll that they can read and write either by a personal application or by the production of a certificate from an authority appointed by the local Government such as a magistrate or school-teacher, or an inspectress of schools. It may be assumed that only those who are interested and politically conscious will apply. Literacy is a qualification which almost any woman who has the will can acquire. It provides for the unmarried woman and will admit women, particularly Muslim women, who have received education privately and have taken no public examinations. Lastly, it is a qualification which will automatically increase the number of women voters year by year as opportunities for education improve. But the figures given below for literate women over 20 show that at present it will not go very far to remove the disparity in voting strength between men and women, and that a second additional qualification is therefore necessary :—

	Women literates over 20 to nearest thousand.
Madras	345,000
Bombay	163,000
Bengal	377,000
United Provinces	128,000
Punjab	85,000
Bihar and Orissa	77,000
Central Provinces	40,000
Assam	40,000

(*b*) We have already explained why it is not possible to enfranchise the wives over the age of 21 of all voters. The Statutory Commission proposed enfranchising all those over 25, but in a country where there is no general registration of births, the practical difficulties of preparing an accurate roll based on age are very great. The only course open to us is to enfranchise the wives over 21 of those voters who possess more than the minimum qualification. Our

recommendation therefore is to enfranchise as council voters the wives of all men who possess the property qualifications at present prescribed for the provincial councils. The roll based upon these qualifications will be maintained, as we are recommending the same property qualifications for the electors of the Federal Assembly. In the Central Provinces, however, we suggest that the present property qualifications for the council should be lowered so as to double the number of electors for the Assembly, as at present they enfranchise barely 1 per cent. of the population. In the case of the Central Provinces we recommend that the wives of those enfranchised on the lowered property qualifications should be given the vote for the provincial councils. Taking into account the fact that some of the men will be bachelors or widowers and some of the wives under age, it is calculated on a rough estimate that the number of women thus enfranchised will be two-thirds of the number of men now on the electoral rolls. Allowing for the fact that there will be considerable overlapping between the three qualifications of property, literacy, and enfranchisement through the husband's qualification, this should produce a total electorate which is administratively practicable, and in which the desired proportion of men to women voters will be achieved.

The enfranchisement of wives.

216. We recognise that the principle of enfranchising a woman on her husband's qualification did not find favour with the representatives of some women's organisations and others who gave evidence before us, on the ground that it would perpetuate the idea of the dependency of the women on the men and would merely duplicate the husband's vote. We think, however, that it is a reasonable view that marriage gives a community of interest, and that in it a woman enters into a partnership with her husband which may well confer civic rights as well as domestic duties. Nor does there seem any valid reason why a woman should be more under the influence of her husband because her name is on the electoral roll for one reason rather than for another. The women who have strong objections to the qualification are among those who can obtain a personal qualification through literacy. Moreover, the qualification was approved in a memorandum signed by a large number of influential women of Bengal and by other organisations and individual witnesses. We consider that not more than one elector, in addition to the husband himself, should be enfranchised under the husband's property qualification. We do not consider that it would be administratively convenient to enfranchise women, now widows, on a qualification which their late husbands enjoyed or might have enjoyed had they been alive at the time of the passing of the statute embodying the new constitution. But it seems equitable to allow a widow who was qualified in respect

of her husband's property qualification to continue on the electoral roll after his death, and we trust that this privilege will do something to improve the status of widowhood. On re-marriage, she should cease to be qualified in respect of her late husband.

The effect of our proposals.

217. We are conscious that a more formidable argument against a franchise which does not give the vote to the wives of all men on the electoral roll, but only to the wives of those who are qualified by property to vote for the Federal Assembly, is that it appears to weight the scales in favour of the well-to-do. On the other hand, literacy will favour the professional classes and will penetrate lower as the opportunities for education develop; while the woman making an independent living in industry will be enfranchised in the labour constituencies which we recommend in Chapter IX. We think therefore that the qualifications we recommend will produce a woman's electorate large enough to be effective and varied enough to represent the interests of women generally. The following table shows the approximate number of women who will be qualified under each heading :—

Province.	Independent property qualification.	Literacy.	Husband's property qualification.	Total women's electorate.	Ratio of men to women.
Madras ..	718,000	345,000	700,000	1,500,000	4 : 1
Bombay ..	50,000	163,000	592,000	750,000	4 : 1
Bengal	500,000	377,000	800,000	1,500,000	4 : 1
United Provinces	414,000	128,000	1,100,000	1,500,000	4 : 1
Punjab ..	101,000	85,000	376,000	450,000	5 : 1
Bihar and Orissa	46,000	77,000	280,000	350,000	9 : 1
Central Provinces	70,000	40,000	266,000	350,000	5 : 1
Assam	30,000	40,000	192,000	220,000	4 : 1

In estimating the total women's electorate, we have made some deductions for the overlapping of qualifications. A number of the figures are based on estimates and the precise strength of the new electorate will not be known until the electoral roll is prepared. The figures here given do, however, give an adequate idea of the effect of our proposals. It is evident from a comparison with the table on page 85 that we have approached much nearer to real equality than was possible under an equal franchise and we are confident that we have ensured a voting strength far in excess of what women would have attained by the indirect system of voting. Our franchise proposals increase the men's electorate four and a half times, and the women's no less than twenty-one times.

Proposals for the representation of women.

218. Finally there is the question of the best method of filling the special seats which we have recommended should be reserved for women in the provincial councils. The All-India Women's Conference were opposed to the granting of any special facilities and wished women to be returned " by the open door of competition," but this opinion was based on the assumption that adult franchise, either direct or indirect, was practicable. On the other hand, a very large number of witnesses, both men and women, who gave evidence individually or as representatives of associations, felt strongly that, although women should be free to contest constituencies on the same terms as men, some minimum representation should be secured for the first ten years. In those provinces where there is at present a woman member, she has been nominated by the Governor. Under a system of responsible government, nomination is clearly ruled out. Various other proposals have been made. First, that the required number of women should be co-opted by the newly elected council, by the single transferable vote. The objections to co-option are that the women would be chosen by a council probably consisting wholly of men and would be responsible to no constituency ; and, further, that the possibility of entering the council by the easy path of co-option would discourage them from going through the fatigue and expense of contesting a seat. Women would, therefore, be in no better position for fighting an election at the end of the temporary period, when the special facilities would be withdrawn. A second suggestion was to elect to the reserved seats by a special electorate of educated women. The last stated objection applies to this method also, while the feeling among women witnesses against any separate or sectional electorate was very strong. We respect this opinion, but feel that in some provinces the social difficulties of a woman canvassing the votes of men may be insuperable for a few years.

219. Two other very interesting suggestions for filling the special seats have been put forward. The first is the setting apart for women of seats in selected urban areas, the electorate for the purpose in each such area being the electors belonging to that area, both men and women, the voters having in those areas two votes, one in the general constituency, and the other for a woman candidate. The second is that women should stand for any constituency for which they were qualified and that those women who, not being returned at the head of the poll, obtained the highest percentage of votes as compared with the numbers of electors on the roll in the constituencies in which women competed, should be declared elected, up to the number of seats specially reserved for women. The proposal for selected urban areas is generally speaking easier and cheaper for a woman, but it favours the townswoman more than the countrywoman. The second scheme has the great merit that no woman would be returned to the council unless she had had some

measure of success in an ordinary open election. It would give valuable training for the time when special facilities were abolished, and might help a woman to win the seat outright at a later election. Its demerits are that electioneering in country districts is particularly difficult for women candidates, so that not enough women might come forward as candidates, or if there was a proviso that no woman who forfeited her deposit could be returned, all the reserved seats might not be filled. It would also mean that both the successful and the defeated candidate would be declared elected for the same constituency.

Our proposals for the representation of women.

220. Pending a decision on the communal question and the determination of the exact number of seats in each provincial legislature we can make no recommendation as to the number of seats which should be reserved for women, beyond the percentage already mentioned. The second proposal seems to be likely to lead to results which might be very unfair when candidates are elected by proportions of votes cast in constituencies where they are not competing against one another. We are, therefore, inclined to prefer the method by which seats will be reserved for women in constituencies, urban or rural, formed for the purpose and containing both men and women. It is impossible to put forward at this stage any definite suggestions regarding the formation of such constituencies, but they should be determined when the territorial constituencies are being delimited.

The Federal Legislature.

221. The question of the women's franchise and representation for the Federal Legislature is discussed in paragraph 409.

CHAPTER IX.—REPRESENTATION OF LABOUR IN THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES.

222. The problem of the methods by which "the representation of labour could most effectively be secured" in the new legislature was one to which our attention was particularly drawn at the time of our appointment. The question is one of great and obvious importance and of no little complexity in the special condition of India. It may be considered in two main sections:—

(i) Agricultural labour.

(ii) Industrial labour, i.e., labour in organised and unorganised industries, commerce and other kindred occupations.

Statistics.

223. Before proceeding to a detailed examination of the problem under the heads indicated above, it will be convenient to place on record certain statistics as to the strength of agricultural and industrial labour in India to-day and as to the degree and nature of the representation at present enjoyed by labour in the various provincial legislative councils.

224. While the non-agricultural wage-earning population of India has been estimated at as large a figure as 25 millions, the number of persons engaged in organised industrial labour alone appears, on the best opinion we can form, to approach 5 millions. In the case of agricultural labour, on the basis of the definition suggested in paragraph 226 below, the numbers appear to be in the neighbourhood of 23 millions.

Present representation in legislative councils.

225. The representation at present enjoyed in the various provincial legislative councils by labour as defined in subhead (ii) of paragraph 1 above is as follows:—

Madras	Nil.
Bombay	3 seats.
Bengal	2 seats.
United Provinces	Nil.
Punjab	1 seat.
Bihar and Orissa	1 seat.
Central Provinces	1 seat.
Assam	1 seat.

In all cases this representation is secured by means of nomination by the Governor.

I.—Agricultural Labour.

The definition.

226. We turn in the first place to the question of the representation of agricultural labour. The true definition of agricultural labour for our present purpose appears to be the landless labourer or the farm servant who owns or rents no land and who is entirely dependent on the employer from whom he receives his wages. The question for our consideration is, in the first place, whether it is possible to devise a basis for the franchise in rural areas such that Agricultural labour, in the sense defined above, will secure under it a substantial representation on the electoral roll; secondly, whether irrespective of the extent to which such representation is secured, special representation in the legislatures is required in the case of agricultural labour, and, if it is required, by what means provision can be best made for it.

Possibility of securing representation through the general franchise.

227. The first of these questions is one which has been constantly present to us throughout our investigations. The number of agricultural labourers, their position in the structure of Indian society, the importance, at a time when new and extensive responsibilities and powers are being placed upon provincial legislatures, of securing that the lowest and least organised classes of the population shall have some opportunity to influence decisions which may vitally affect them, have all weighed with us in our consideration of the problem. In each province which we have visited, we have accordingly consistently applied to the franchise proposals put forward for our consideration the test of the extent to which the landless labourer and the farm servant would be represented, directly or indirectly, in the legislatures.

228. The chief methods suggested—short of adult suffrage—for securing the effective representation of the agricultural labourer on the electoral roll have been the adoption of the group system, the adoption of a system of household suffrage, the adoption as the basis of the franchise of the receipt, whether in cash or kind, of wages of a certain value, and the adoption of a rental qualification.

The group system.

229. We have already indicated in Chapters III and IV the reasons for which we are unable to accept the group system as the general basis of the franchise. While its adoption to represent certain well defined and clearly delimited sections of the population might in certain circumstances be practicable, we are definitely of opinion that it could not satisfactorily be applied in the case of a section of the population so loosely defined, and so fluid in character as agricultural labour.

Household suffrage.

230. The practicability and desirability of a system of household suffrage have equally been examined in Chapter III. For the reasons therein stated we have reluctantly rejected it as a general basis for the franchise. The practical objections to its introduction in the case of agricultural labour alone—in particular the difficulty of compiling and maintaining an electoral roll—are in our view overwhelming, and we are unable to recommend its adoption.

A wage-earner's franchise.

231. We turn to the suggestion for the adoption of the receipt of wages, whether in cash or kind, subject to a minimum to be fixed, as the basis of the franchise. *Prima facie*, it has much to commend it, and, were it practicable, it would largely if not entirely solve the problem. But the result of the investigations undertaken and the enquiries made by us in various provinces go to show that here too practical objections of a decisive character exist to its adoption. In the first place, assuming an electorate of the type proposed, constituted in rural areas on the basis of the inclusion of all agricultural workers drawing wages above a certain minimum, it is clear that very great difficulty must be experienced in ascertaining with confidence the income of individuals where the majority of employers keep no books. This difficulty is aggravated by the fluid and migratory character of a section of agricultural labour and by the fact that agricultural employment in the villages is of a seasonal character and is not constant throughout the year. The opportunities for manipulating the electoral roll would be extensive, and the openings for appeal and objection innumerable. A second and still more serious objection is that the remuneration of the agricultural worker is to a large extent paid in kind. The difficulty of assessing the comparative value of wages paid in cash and wages paid in kind is likely to be great even in the same province, while the varying economic level of adjoining provinces could not but result in markedly different wage levels as the basis of the agricultural franchise, which might prove a cause of grievance. The position is further complicated by the fact that the value of wages paid in kind must inevitably vary from year to year with the state of the crops and price fluctuations and with local conditions, and that the greatest difficulty may be anticipated in striking any satisfactory uniform figure. Attractive as is the proposal to adopt wages in cash or kind as the basis of the franchise, the majority of us are driven to the conclusion that it is not in present circumstances practicable in rural areas in India.

A house rental qualification.

232. Finally, we have carefully considered the possibility of adopting the payment of house rent as a basis for the franchise in rural areas. We have to a large extent adopted the rental qualification as the basis of the urban franchise which we recommend. But in rural areas we are faced with much difficulty in assessing and relating rental values, and we are satisfied that in adopting in preference as a general rule the payment of taxation or assessment to land-revenue of a low amount, we have chosen a basis which will secure as representative an electorate as is possible in present circumstances.

Our conclusion.

233. Our general conclusion in these circumstances is that the only real solution of the problem lies in the reduction of the general franchise qualification in rural areas to the lowest limit possible. We recognise that even under the extensive proposals which we have made and which are summarised in Chapter VII. of our Report, a proportion of the landless labourers and farm servants will be left without direct representation. But, short of adult suffrage, which for the reasons already given we have rejected at the present stage, we can think of no method by which this problem can be satisfactorily solved. A proportion of individuals in all classes of the population will have no direct vote of their own. The real question is whether this class as a whole will secure representation on the electoral roll. We are satisfied that the proposals made by us elsewhere, if they do not completely solve the problem, will go far to ensure that the needs and opinions of that stratum of the population now under our consideration will to some extent be represented in the legislatures. The proposals in question will, if accepted, bring on to the electoral roll a large proportion of the small holders and small tenants throughout India. In Bihar and Orissa—to take a single example—they will enfranchise the payer of chaukidari tax of six annas (say sixpence halfpenny) a year. We are impressed by evidence adduced to us in every province to the effect that however great may be on many occasions the divergence of interest and opinion between master and servant, the line of division, broadly speaking, between the ordinary agricultural labourer and the small tenant is less in India than might be thought to be the case ; and that in many parts of the country both are to a large degree drawn from the same class. In agreement with every local Government and every provincial committee in India, we consider that, short of an extension of the franchise to a degree which we regard as impracticable at this stage, there is no means of enfranchising agricultural labour as such, but we are satisfied that under the franchise we recommend, it will secure a certain representation on the electoral roll. This is more particularly the case in view of our proposals for the enfranchisement of the depressed

classes, from the ranks of which labour in the countryside is so largely drawn in all provinces. Moreover—and we regard this as a point of definite importance in the present connection—the representatives of the depressed classes may be expected to assist in urging the needs of rural labour in the new legislatures.

Question of special representation in the legislatures for agricultural labour.

234. Before turning to the consideration of the problem of industrial labour, we may refer briefly to the question of the practicability of providing special representation in the legislatures for agricultural labour as defined above. We may observe in the first place that the evidence tendered to us by local Governments, provincial committees and individual witnesses lent no support to action on these lines. The general sense of the evidence was that representation could best, and indeed only, be secured through the influence of voters on the representatives of rural areas in the general constituencies. The concrete suggestion has been made that seats might be reserved for landless labour in multi-member constituencies in rural areas containing more than a fixed percentage of this class. But after closer examination of this suggestion, and of the views expressed on it by those local Governments and committees to whom it was referred by us for examination, we regard it as impracticable. So far as the labourer's interests as an agriculturist are concerned, it can be argued that they will be represented by the very large number of rural voters who will be on the roll. As regards his interests as an employee, we feel that in addition to the influence which the relatively small number of electors of the agricultural labourer class will be able to exercise through their fellow agriculturists and their representatives in the legislatures, the representatives of labour in the legislatures may be relied upon to interest themselves broadly in their welfare as wage-earners.

II.—Representation of industrial labour.

Sphere of the federal and provincial legislatures in labour matters.

235. We would preface our discussion of the question of the representation in the new provincial legislatures of industrial labour as defined in paragraph 222 above by the observation that, as we understand the position, labour legislation will, under the new constitution, be largely a central subject, under the general control of the central legislature, while the provinces will be responsible for the administration of the laws affecting labour, and for legislating for local conditions within the general framework of the Acts passed by the central legislature. We deal in a separate chapter with the question of the special representation of labour in the central legislature.

Representation of industrial labour on the electoral roll.

236. The first problem in connection with industrial labour, whether organised or unorganised, is whether it will secure adequate representation on the electoral rolls through the franchise proposed, and if not, whether special representation should be granted to it as a function in the provincial legislatures.

The next question is that of the method by which such special representation can best be secured if it is agreed that it is necessary.

237. As regards the first of these questions, the proposals we make elsewhere for the lowering of the franchise will, in our view, bring in a considerable number of workers in urban areas of the type now under examination.

In Bihar and Orissa, the payer of the lowest amount of municipal tax (Re. 1–8–0 per annum) is being enfranchised. In Madras City, the qualifying annual rental value will be reduced to Rs. 18. In Bombay, the occupation of a house or building of the annual rental value of Rs. 60 in Bombay City, of Rs. 30 in Karachi, and of Rs. 18 in other urban areas, will qualify. We may remark in this connection that the average rent of a single room in a *chawl* in Bombay is Rs. 5½ a month. In Bengal, the payment of any rate or local tax will enfranchise, while in the United Provinces the rental qualification in urban areas will be reduced to Rs. 24 per annum. A house rent of Rs. 12 per annum will qualify in urban areas in the Central Provinces and a substantial reduction is also contemplated in the qualifying minimum in the Punjab. We recognise that even these reductions may leave without the vote considerable sections of labour of the type now under consideration, and we have carefully considered the possibility of devising an alternative basis for the franchise which would bring upon the electoral roll, within the limits administratively manageable, larger numbers of voters of the working class. The most important suggestions for achieving this object which have been made to us are the establishment of a franchise based on a rental qualification, and the introduction of a wage-earning qualification.

A rental qualification in urban areas.

238. As regards the first of these suggested bases for the franchise, our proposals for the urban franchise are in fact to a large extent based on a rental qualification. But we think that the objections to its introduction on a scale wider than we have proposed are real. We have already reduced the urban qualifications for the vote to the lowest point we consider practicable, and any further reduction which would substantially increase the number of voters would in our view be likely so to swell the numbers on the electoral roll as to produce an electorate of unmanageable size. In the circumstances

we do not consider the extension of the rental basis for the franchise beyond the point recommended in our proposals in Chapter VII practicable in present conditions. We recognise that in certain provinces, lodgers in towns may fail to secure direct representation under our proposals, but short of adult suffrage, which, as already explained, we consider impracticable, we are unable to devise any method at this stage of providing for their inclusion in the electorate.

A wage-earners' franchise in urban areas.

239. We have already examined the question of a wage-earners' franchise in connection with agricultural labour. For the reasons given in paragraph 231, we are unable to accept it as a satisfactory solution of that problem. Conditions in towns are different and more favourable to the adoption of a proposal of this nature. But as will be seen, the majority of us think it preferable to deal with labour on the alternative basis proposed by us in connection with the trade union and industrial constituencies recommended later. We are satisfied that this will at once be easier to work and will produce an equally representative electorate.

Necessity of special representation for labour in the provincial legislatures.

240. In these circumstances, we are of opinion that while a fair number of urban workers will secure a place on the electoral roll, the proportion will not be such as to secure, except in a few cases, that urban labour will be able to return representatives of its own choice through general constituencies. We are, therefore, definitely of opinion, if only for this reason, that special representation is required for it. But from a different standpoint, we may remark that we found substantial support throughout India for the principle that if special representation is to be granted to capital through the reservation of seats in the legislatures for commerce and industry, representation should also be accorded to labour. With this view, we are in entire agreement. The importance of adequate representation of labour in the legislatures at a time when labour questions bulk so prominently and when international opinion is so much concerned with the improvement of the conditions of the workers, is one which hardly calls for detailed argument. We are in complete accord with the view expressed by the Royal Commission on Indian Labour on page 463 of their report that " if special electorates are to remain a feature of the Indian constitution, there is hardly any class with so strong a claim to representation by this method as industrial labour . . . If special constituencies are retained, it should be recognised that labour has not less claim to representation than employers."

241. The argument has, however, been adduced that, since labour under the new constitution will be a central subject, it should properly be represented, if at all, in the federal legislature, and that special representation in the provincial legislature is unnecessary. We are unable to share this view. While the responsibility for the co-ordination of labour policy and the international representation of India in labour matters will rest with the federal Government, the administration of labour legislation must for the most part be in the hands of the provinces, and we regard it as essential that the provincial legislatures should contain representatives of labour who can watch over the provincial administration of general labour policy, and can represent the legitimate desires and grievances of the industrial labouring classes.

Methods by which special representation can best be secured.

242. Assuming then the necessity of special representation for labour, the question arises as to the method by which this can best be secured. Three main choices present themselves :—

(*i*) nomination ;
(*ii*) election by registered trade unions ;
(*iii*) election by special labour constituencies.

We proceed to examine these *seriatim*.

(i) Nomination.

243. It has been generally agreed that the method of nomination is inappropriate under the system of responsible government, for the reason that it may give to the nominator the power to make or unmake governments, while it affords no choice to the members of the community concerned, and gives them no training in political affairs. It could not, therefore, in our judgment be adopted as a method of representing labour, though there may be one or two quite exceptional cases where no other method of securing any representation of a large number of isolated or backward people can at present be found. It is arguable for instance that in the special circumstances of Assam, nomination might be the least unsatisfactory alternative. But even here, we are definitely of opinion that the balance of advantage is against nomination, and we cannot regard it as a satisfactory solution of the problem of the representation of labour.

(ii) Representation through Trade Unions.

244. One argument in favour of this method is the fact, which must necessarily carry great weight, that the expert body which so recently as 1931, after two years' enquiry, analysed in great detail the

position and conditions of labour in India, definitely recommended the adoption as a general rule of registered trade unions of a certain standard, and subject to certain restrictions, as the basis of labour representation. The recommendation on this point of the Royal Commission on Labour in India was as follows :—

> " If special representation is to be given to industrial labour, the method which in our view is most likely to be effective in securing the return to the legislatures of the best representatives of labour, is that of election by registered trade unions. The working of this method should also exercise an important influence on the healthy development of trade unionism. Where only one seat was given, the trade unions might elect the member. Where more than one seat was allotted to labour, the unions could either be grouped for this purpose in separate constituencies, possibly according to industries, or they could elect the members jointly. As regards the details we recommend the setting up in each province of a special tribunal to determine before each election the weight which should be given to each registered trade union. The tribunal might consist of three members unconnected with industry or labour and presided over by a high judicial officer. The Registrar of Trade Unions should not be a member, but should give the tribunal such assistance as they require. The grant of the vote should be limited to unions which have been registered for not less than one year, and it would be the duty of the tribunal, after such investigation as was necessary in the case of each union, to determine the actual paying membership and to allocate votes accordingly. We recognise that this method may not be everywhere applicable under present conditions, and if it was found to be impracticable in any case, recourse would be necessary for a time to some other method. In Assam, for instance, where more effective representation of the plantation workers is required, different methods will be necessary."

245. We found in the course of our discussions with local Governments and provincial committees a readiness in the majority of cases to agree that where trade unions in India are properly organised and reasonably representative, they would, subject to the qualifications proposed by the Royal Commission on Labour, form a suitable basis for the special representation of labour. As will be seen from the detailed analysis of their recommendations which follows, the Governments of Bombay, the United Provinces, and the Central Provinces, and the provincial committees in Bombay, the United Provinces, and the Punjab are prepared at once to accept those recommendations either as a whole or in part. But conditions vary greatly. In some provinces there are well organised and competent trade unions, particularly in the sheltered trades; elsewhere the trade

union movement is as yet almost wholly undeveloped; or, while development has begun, it has not yet reached a point at which the trade union movement can be called representative of labour as a whole. The general trend of the evidence submitted to us went to show that, broadly speaking, the movement is as yet in its relatively early stages, that the number of industrial workers covered by it, even in provinces such as Bengal and Bombay, in which organised industry is highly developed, is relatively small; that women are affected by it only in a negligible degree; and that there could be no certainty that industrial labour would secure effective representation were trade unions to be adopted as the sole method of representing labour in the legislatures. We recognise that the unions have been passing through a difficult period, that their present membership is less than it was a few years ago, and that an improvement may in the ordinary course of events be looked for in the future. But in the light of the evidence we have taken, and of the statistics as to the number and strength of the registered trade unions in India relatively to the industrial population of the various provinces which are contained in the statement* below, we are unable, despite the arguments in favour of this course, to accept trade unions as the sole basis of labour representation:—

——	Number of registered unions (March 1931).	Membership.	Number of operatives in registered factories.†
Madras	17	36,707 (809 women).	142,549
Bombay..	36	66,292 (607 women).	243,945
Bengal	28	75,756 (561 women).	563,877
United Provinces ..	6	12,843 (no women).	92,161

*There are in addition a number of unions, some of substantial importance, which are not yet registered or which, in certain cases, cannot be registered under the present law.

†The total industrial population including railways, factories, seamen, plantation labour, &c., appears, as will be seen from para. 224, on the best opinion we can form, to approach five millions.

—	Number of registered unions (March 1931).	Membership.	Number of operatives in registered factories.
Punjab	19	9,931 (639 women all in one union).	49,549
Bihar and Orissa ..	3	71 in two (No women).	66,315
Central Provinces ..	11	5,606 (585 women all in one union).	68,856
Assam	Nil.	Nil.	6,721 (in factories other than tea factories).

246. Before passing to our recommendations as to the use to be made of trade unions in connection with the representation of labour, we desire to refer to a suggestion which has been put forward that it is desirable to accept trade unions as the basis of labour representation on the ground that such acceptance would be likely to lead to a very considerable development of those bodies on sound lines. As we have already indicated, subject always to the conditions laid down by the Royal Commission, we are prepared to accept the proposals of a number of provinces for the establishment of trade union seats in their legislatures, and this action will no doubt give an impetus to the development of unions of a satisfactory character. It would, however, in our view be contrary to the interests of the labouring population as a whole to prescribe representation through trade unions as the sole method of representation of labour and to offer them no alternative. There are cases where trade unions do not exist, or are too weak to be entrusted with the function of representation. It is essential in our view to take effective and immediate steps to provide for the representation of labour. There can be no certainty that trade unions would develop so rapidly as is suggested, or that even if they were so to develop, it would be on such lines as to satisfy the tribunal proposed by the Royal Commission. In these circumstances, there is a real risk that, in the absence of any alternative, a large body of industrial labour might, for a very considerable time, fail to secure any representation other than that which it might be able to obtain through the general constituencies. We think, therefore, that it is necessary to provide in addition another form of representation through special labour constituencies of the type described in paragraph 250.

Trade union constituencies.

247. We consider that in order to qualify as an electoral unit for the purpose of voting for a special trade union constituency, a union should have been registered for a minimum period of one year and have a minimum strength of 100. In the case of the first election under the new constitution the period might be reduced to six months. Where the trade union constituency is confined to a single area, voting might be direct. Where on the other hand it covers two or more different centres, we suggest election to the seat or seats allotted to trade unions in the particular province through an electoral college composed of delegates elected in each union in the proportion of one for every group of 100 voters. In the varying circumstances of individual provinces, seats might, if conditions made this feasible and desirable, be allotted from among the trade union seats to be filled by representatives of particular trade unions of special importance or a specially large membership.

Qualifications of electors.

248. The qualifications we suggest for electors in trade union constituencies are a minimum age of 21, and paying membership for at least six months of a registered trade union which has itself been in existence for at least twelve months. For the first election under the new constitution we recommend as a special case membership for a minimum of three months of a registered trade union which has been in existence for at least six months.

Qualifications of candidates.

249. A candidate for a trade union constituency should in our view be either a member, or an honorary member, or an official as defined by the Trade Unions Act, of one of the trade unions concerned, his position in any of these capacities to be of not less than one year's standing.

Establishment of special labour constituencies.

250. The alternative which has been suggested to the trade unions as the basis of representation is the establishment of special labour constituencies, the electorate of which would be composed of workers in selected urban and rural areas and centres. Madras, the United Provinces, the Punjab, and Bihar and Orissa are all prepared to agree to the establishment of one or more constituencies of this nature, while Bengal is investigating the possibility of securing representation for labour through special constituencies

based on the group system. While constituencies of this type are possibly not the ideal solution of the difficult problem before us, they have the great merit of bringing in unorganised as well as organised labour; and we regard them as being in present conditions the most satisfactory solution, in combination with trade union constituencies, of labour representation in industrial areas. We suggest that if a trade union exists in any industry or trade for which a special constituency is provided, it should be combined, for electoral purposes, with other trade unions in the same area or province. The electorate for these constituencies should include the workers on the roll of any factory or other industrial undertaking employing a minimum of ten persons.

Qualifications of electors.

251. The qualifications we suggest for electors in the special labour constituencies are a minimum age of 21, and continuous employment with any employer for a period of six months immediately prior to the preparation or revision of the electoral roll.

We would exclude the clerical and supervisory staff, leaving them to vote in the general constituencies. But we would admit foremen, *sardars*, jobbers, *mistries*, and other persons of similar standing to the electoral roll.

Qualifications of candidates.

252. We are inclined to think that the balance of advantage rests on the whole with avoiding too rigid a restriction of the limits within which a candidate for the special labour constituencies may be chosen. We regard it as important, on the other hand, that, so far as this can be secured, he should be in a position genuinely to represent the mass of the working class population in his constituency. The committee are divided in opinion as to the qualifications to be required in a candidate for election in a special constituency. Some of us consider that no restrictions should be placed on candidates. Others would require a candidate to be an elector in the special constituency, or to be a paying member, an honorary member, or an official of a registered trade union. While fully conscious of the objections to a restriction of this nature, they think it desirable to provide that *sardars*, jobbers, head jobbers, and persons standing in a similar relation to workers should not be eligible to stand as candidates for special labour constituencies. In the case of plantation labour they would have no objection to a candidate being drawn from outside the special constituency if necessary.

Distribution of labour representation as between trade union seats and special labour constituencies.

253. In the preceding paragraphs of this chapter, we have indicated that trade union constituencies, and special labour constituencies, are in our judgment the appropriate solution in present conditions of the problem of the representation of labour, and we have made suggestions for the general basis of the electorate for the constituencies in question, and the qualifications to be required in electors and candidates. Before we turn to an examination of the proposals of the various provinces in the light of these conclusions, we wish to emphasize the extreme importance of avoiding any overlapping between the trade union and the special labour constituencies, whether in the same industry or in the same geographical area. The problem is one of much difficulty, and will require careful working out in consultation with provincial authorities and labour organisations. It is impossible for us in the time and with the information at our disposal to deal with it adequately, and we confine ourselves accordingly to recording in the case of individual provinces the total number of seats which we consider should be set aside for the representation of labour, leaving (save where we feel in a position to express a provisional opinion) the allocation of these seats as between trade union and labour constituencies for settlement at a later date in connection with the general delimitation of constituencies. In recommending the number of seats to be allotted to labour in each of the provincial legislatures, we have been influenced in our decision not only by the number of seats at present allotted to both commerce and labour, but also by the size of the industrial population in each province, and its distribution both geographically and by industries.

254. We now turn to the detailed consideration of the proposals submitted by the various provinces.

MADRAS.

Views of the local Government and the Provincial Franchise Committee.

255. The local Government and the Provincial Committee agree in recommending the establishment of special labour constituencies in selected centres of industrial population. The Provincial Committee suggest that the electorate should be composed of all those in the areas in question who are usually employed as factory workers, mechanical transport workers, and dockyard or port workers; who are not employed on clerical duties or the like; or who have been members for a period of one year of a permanent

registered trade union and have paid their union subscription. The local Government agree as to the desirability of special industrial constituencies but would base the electorate on workers in factories registered under the Factories Act. They make no reference to membership of a registered trade union as a qualification. They suggest the imposition of a minimum monthly qualifying wage of Rs. 12 for men and Rs. 8 for women, together with a qualifying period of employment of six months in the year preceding the preparation or revision of the electoral roll. The Provincial Committee make no suggestion as regards a minimum qualifying wage or a qualifying period of employment. But, in agreement with the Government, they consider that the vote should be granted only on application by the worker.

256. Under the proposals of the local Government a candidate for the special labour constituencies must either be on the electoral roll of any of those constituencies in the Presidency, or have been a member for two years preceding his nomination of a registered permanent trade union of industrial workers in the Presidency with a strength of not less than 500 members. The Committee, " recognising that it may be difficult for employed workers to get away for sessions of the Council without losing their employment " would make persons on any electoral roll for the Legislative Council eligible as candidates.

Our proposals.

257. We understand that the local Government contemplate the provision of two seats in a house of 210, and the Provincial Committee three seats in a house of 220. In view of the general industrial development of Madras, and of the extent to which trade unions have been organised in that Presidency, we recommend the allocation to labour of six seats in a house of approximately the size suggested. As explained above, we make no specific recommendation for their allocation as between trade union and special labour constituencies, though we may note that the railway and textile unions appear to have reached a relatively high degree of development, and that there is an important labour population in mufassal towns which could not at present easily be represented by the trade union constituency.

BOMBAY

Views of the local Government and the Provincial Franchise Committee.

258. In the case of Bombay, where the trade union movement is more strongly developed and more highly organised than in other parts of India, the local Government and the Provincial Franchise Committee agree in recommending the adoption of registered trade

unions as the basis of representation of organised industrial labour on the lines, and subject to the restrictions, suggested by the Royal Commission on Labour. For unorganised labour in towns the Government favour nomination, the Committee making no specific recommendation, though it records that in the opinion of most of its members such labour would be strongly represented on the ordinary electoral roll of the general constituencies. Organised labour would be represented by members elected by an electoral college to be formed by registered trade unions composed of manual workers throughout the Presidency, electing delegates in the proportion of one for every 20 members of such trade unions. Provision should be made in the electoral rules that trade unions which send delegates to the electoral college shall require adequate standards of paying membership ; and the Registrar of Trade Unions should also be given adequate powers of scrutiny for this purpose. Candidates for election should be ordinary or honorary members of at least one year's standing of a registered trade union which is itself of at least one year's standing.

Our proposals.

259. The number of seats at present reserved for labour in Bombay is three in a house of 114. We propose the allocation of eight seats in the new legislature of about twice the size. Besides Bombay, there are other important industrial centres such as Ahmedabad, Karachi and Sholapur. Here as elsewhere we make no recommendation as regards their distribution between trade union and special labour constituencies, though we observe that the existence of relatively vigorous registered trade unions in Bombay City should tend to facilitate the task of allocation in that area. We note, however, that while the total number of women in industry, and particularly in the textile industry, is considerable, the number who are members of registered trade unions is negligible and we recommend that special attention should be paid to this point.

BENGAL.

Views of the local Government and the Provincial Franchise Committee.

260. In Bengal the local Government and the majority of the Provincial Committee favour the grant of special representation to labour through the group system. The local Government indicate that they consider that nomination is the best method of securing adequate representation for industrial labour, but they are prepared to make an experiment through the group system to secure representation for :—

(*a*) Workers in jute and textile factories,
(*b*) Workers in coal mines, and
(*c*) Tea garden labour,

if nomination is considered undesirable or impracticable.

261. We are unable to regard nomination as desirable, and we have invited the Government of Bengal to make experiments of the nature suggested by them. We await the final result of their investigations. This they were unable to communicate to us before the signature of our report, but they have informed us that, on the assumption that no age limit outside the Mines and Factories Acts is imposed, the approximate numbers who would secure representation in Bengal in the three groups of workers referred to in paragraph 260 would be as follows :—

Jute and textile mills	..	300,000
Coal mines	..	45,000
Tea gardens	..	170,000 (this figure is stated to be a rough guess).

Our proposals.

262. The problem of representation of labour is of particular importance in Bengal, the industrial population of which appears to exceed 1,000,000. Two seats are at present reserved for labour in a legislature of 140. We recommend, with one dissentient, that eight seats should be set aside in the new and enlarged legislature proposed. We leave the allocation for decision during the delimitation of constituencies which will take place at a later stage. We would, however, observe that the number of registered trade unions in the Presidency is 28, that their strength in March, 1931, was 75,756 (of this total 54,000 is accounted for by four unions), and that certain trades, notably jute and textiles, would appear to afford a basis for the formation without difficulty of special labour constituencies. There are also large planting and mining interests in the province. While the largest concentration of labour is in the jute mills, trade union organisation in that section of industry is at present very deficient.

THE UNITED PROVINCES.

Views of the local Government and the Provincial Franchise Committee.

263. Organised industrial labour in the United Provinces exists only in Cawnpore. Of the 92,000 persons (including some 7,000 women) employed in factories registered under the Indian Factories Act, 35,000 are concentrated in Cawnpore district ; six other districts have between them 35,000, while the remainder are spread over 32 districts. In these circumstances the local Government recommend the establishment of a special industrial constituency for Cawnpore to embrace all adult labourers who for six months have been employed in factories (as defined in the Factories Act) on wages of Rs. 12 per mensem or over. They calculate that in this manner about 50,000 operatives will be enfranchised. But, in the opinion of the local Government the operatives will find the greatest difficulty

in combining to return a representative in places other than Cawnpore even if the wage qualification is as low as Rs. 12. They therefore propose to reserve a further seat for representation through trade unions on the understanding that those unions shall first be recognised by a tribunal such as that recommended by the Whitley Commission, and that no union shall be admitted for this purpose until the tribunal is satisfied that it embraces a number of workers so substantial as to be representative of the interests of the industry concerned. The Provincial Committee would reduce the wage qualification to Rs. 10, but are otherwise in general agreement with the proposals of the local Government.

Our proposals.

264. We recommend the provision of three seats in the new legislature, their allocation to be determined during the delimitation of constituencies.

PUNJAB.

Views of the local Government and the Provincial Franchise Committee.

265. The Government of the Punjab in the light of discussion with the Indian Franchise Committee would allot one seat to labour, to be filled by a special electorate composed of the factory population receiving wages above a certain figure to be fixed, and employed continuously for a certain minimum time. The Provincial Committee are of opinion that even under the reduced franchise proposed, industrial workers will not be able to secure representation in general constituencies. They therefore recommend, with one dissentient, three seats for labour in a Legislative Council of about 200, two to represent unorganised urban labour through special constituencies, and one to represent registered trade unions.

Our proposals.

266. We are prepared to agree to the allocation to labour of seats on the scale proposed by the Provincial Committee, leaving their distribution between trade union and special labour constituencies for settlement at a later stage when the constituencies are being delimited.

BIHAR AND ORISSA.

Views of the local Government and the Provincial Franchise Committee.

267. This province contains two important industrial areas, viz., Jamshedpur, with its suburb Jugsalai, and the Jharia colliery area in the Manbhum district. The local Government recommend the establishment for Jamshedpur of a special industrial constituency. The Provincial Committee suggest a separate urban constituency

based in Jamshedpur on being a wage earner (in the Tata Iron and Steel Company) with two or more years' service, being in receipt of Re. 1 a day as wages, and having a holding or shop for which some rent is paid. These qualifications would give an electorate of about 15,000 (including a certain number of women labourers) in Jamshedpur. In Jugsalai, where municipal tax is paid, there would be no difficulty in fixing a suitable qualification.

268. The local Government further recommend a special constituency for the Jharia colliery area with qualifications on the same general lines as proposed in the case of Jamshedpur. They add, "It may also be found desirable and practicable to create similar franchise qualifications for the colliery and mining labour force in the Hazaribagh collieries and in the mines in Singhbhum and Palamau and to amalgamate the special electorate so formed with the electorates of one or other of the two special constituencies" to which reference is made above, but they are not prepared to create more than two special constituencies in all, and remark that it is possible that the Singhbhum and Palamau mining labourers should merely be enfranchised by special qualifications and should vote in the general constituencies.

269. The Provincial Committee recommend for the colliery areas that colliery labourers should vote in a general constituency, a certain standard of wages, say Rs. 150, and residence for a year or so, being fixed as an alternative qualification so as to enfranchise the labourers in these areas. "One or more rural constituencies could easily be so framed as to give a preponderance of votes to the colliery labourers, in order to enable them to elect men of their own choice, and the Committee recommend that this should be done."

Our proposals.

270. In view of the scattered nature of the industries in the province which include the great iron and steel works at Jamshedpur, and the planting districts in the North, besides the mining areas, we recommend the allocation of four seats to labour in the new and enlarged legislature. On the question of their allocation we would remark only that the weakness of the trade union movement would appear from the statistics furnished to us to be relatively greater in Bihar and Orissa than in any other province.

CENTRAL PROVINCES.

Views of the local Government and the Provincial Franchise Committee.

271. The local Government recommend the allocation of one seat (out of a total of 100) to be filled through trade unions subject to examination of each union by a tribunal as laid down by the Whitley

Commission. The Committee, who recommend no representation for commerce, recommend in these circumstances no special representation for labour.

Our proposals.

272. We recommend the establishment of two labour seats. Here as elsewhere we leave the question of their distribution as between trade union and special labour constituencies for decision when the constituencies are being delimited at a later stage.

ASSAM.

Views of the local Government and the Provincial Franchise Committee.

273. We now come to the province of Assam which presents problems of a quite special character. Industrial labour is of negligible importance, covering as it does only some 12,000 souls in all; and we are in agreement with the local Government and the Provincial Franchise Committee that special representation is unnecessary for it. But the number of labourers in the Assam tea gardens is very little short of a million. These labourers are at present represented only by a representative of the labouring classes generally who is nominated by the Governor to the provincial Legislative Council, They have no trade unions and no method of securing that their wishes or views should receive a hearing. The fact that they are drawn from different parts of India militates against their combination for the purpose of securing representation. The strong feeling of the Assam Provincial Committee, in these circumstances, was that labour in the tea gardens should be represented by nomination. The local Government concur. They would be prepared to allot three seats for the purpose in the Legislative Council, leaving it to the Governor to try and devise for any area some system under which the labourers themselves could be consulted.

Our proposals.

274. As we have already indicated, we are in principle opposed to nomination; and even in the quite special conditions of the Assam tea gardens, we cannot regard it as a suitable solution of the problem of labour representation. It is clear, however, that a substantial labour representation is justified by the size of the tea garden population and the proportion it bears to the total population of the province; and we recommend the allocation of four seats to tea garden labour. Having regard to the fact that there are no trade unions in Assam, and that election is likely to present problems of special difficulty, we suggest consideration of the possibility of filling those seats by the organisation of special labour constituencies or the group system.

Conclusion.

275. We have indicated earlier in this chapter that we have accepted the principle of the representation of industrial labour in the legislatures through a combination of trade union and special labour constituencies. The force of labour is in its numbers. Until a further lowering of the franchise secures it more wholly adequate representation in the general electoral roll, the proposals we have made will, we think, go far to meet its claims. We trust that in the interim period and while special consideration is given in the legislatures to other interests, the special interests of labour, both organised and unorganised, will secure the representation its importance merits.

276. The following table sets out the figures for the representation of labour, present and proposed, * in the provincial legislatures :—

	Existing representation.	Proposals of		Our proposals.
		Local Government.	Provincial Committee.	
Madras	Nil.	2	3	6
Bombay	3	No specific number proposed.		8
Bengal	2	Ditto		8
United Provinces ..	Nil.	2	2	3
Punjab	1	1	3	3
Bihar and Orissa ..	1	2	1	4
Central Provinces ..	1	1	Nil.	2
Assam	1	3	—	4
Total ..	9	—	—	38

* A supplementary note by the Honourable Mr. Miller will be found on page 200.

CHAPTER X.—THE DEPRESSED CLASSES.

277. The Prime Minister in his letter of instructions stated as follows :—

> " It is evident from the discussions which have occurred in various connections in the Conference that the new constitution must make adequate provision for the representation of the depressed classes, and that the method of representation by nomination is no longer regarded as appropriate. As you are aware, there is a difference of opinion whether the system of separate electorates should be instituted for the depressed classes and your Committee's investigations should contribute towards the decision of this question by indicating the extent to which the depressed classes would be likely, through such general extension of the franchise as you may recommend, to secure the right to vote in ordinary electorates. On the other hand, should it be decided eventually to constitute separate electorates for the depressed classes, either generally or in those provinces in which they form a distinct and separable element in the population, your Committee's inquiry into the general problem of extending the franchise should place you in possession of facts which would facilitate the devising of a method of separate representation for the depressed classes."

278. In carrying out our investigations we carefully followed these instructions. We gave the matter a prominent place in our questionnaire, and afforded every opportunity to the public to place before us their views both orally and in writing.

Definition.

279. The first problem which confronted us was to decide who the depressed classes are. This question was raised in 1916 in consequence of a resolution moved in the Indian Legislative Council. The Government of India addressed a letter to local Governments stating that some definition was required of the term " depressed classes." It was suggested during the discussion in the Indian Legislative Council that the expression " depressed classes " should include :—

(*a*) criminal and wandering tribes ;
(*b*) aboriginal tribes ; and
(*c*) untouchables.

In 1917, Sir Henry Sharp, Educational Commissioner with the Government of India, also prepared a list of depressed classes in which he included :—

(*a*) aboriginal or hill tribes ;
(*b*) depressed classes ; and
(*c*) criminal tribes.

In preparing his list, Sir Henry Sharp said :—" The depressed classes form the unclean castes whose touch or even shadow is pollution. But a wider significance is often attached to the expression, so that it includes communities which though not absolutely outside the pale of caste, are backward and educationally poor and despised and also certain classes of Muhammadans. Some have interpreted it as simply educationally backward. The task of defining is made difficult by doubt as to where the line should be drawn and the elastic differences of such classes as dwell on the borderland of respectability. Sometimes the whole community declares itself to be depressed with a view to reaping special concessions of education or appointment."

280. It will thus be seen that the term " depressed classes " has been used to cover various classes of people such as criminal and wandering tribes, aboriginal tribes, untouchables and sometimes other backward and economically poor classes. The grouping together of such diverse elements for the administrative convenience of Government in dealing with questions relating to the social and economic uplift of these people gave rise to no public criticism.

281. The Southborough Franchise Committee in 1919, adopted the test of untouchability. It divided the Hindu community into three classes, Brahmins, non-Brahmins and others, and in the category of " others," it included only the untouchables. The Statutory Commission adopted the definition " causes pollution by touch or by approach within a certain distance " (Vol. I, page 40). The Indian Central Committee said, " we would confine the term to those who are classed as untouchables " (page 43).

282. If the " depressed classes " are to be recognised as a distinct element of the population for political purposes, it is necessary, so far as possible, to have a more precise classification of them. We consider, for the reasons which we state below, that the term " depressed classes " should not include primitive or aboriginal tribes, nor should it include those Hindus who are only economically poor and in other ways backward but are not regarded as untouchables.

283. We are of opinion that the term should be applied only to those who are " untouchables," and this was the definition adopted by us at the fourth meeting of our Committee in Delhi on February 4th.

284. In response to a request from the United Provinces Franchise Committee, our chairman said that the term depressed classes should be interpreted " for the purpose of the present inquiry as meaning untouchability, that is to say, pollution by touch or approach, as it exists in the United Provinces." This appears to us to be the nearest approach to a general formula that can be

laid down to define the " depressed classes," and we shall presently indicate certain broad lines on which it should be possible to apply it as a test in arriving at definite population figures of these classes.

Lists of depressed classes.

285. The actual classification of castes by the application of certain social criteria or tests can be undertaken on detailed and scientific lines only during a census of the whole population, and we must therefore turn to the census reports for guidance in this matter. The first attempt to classify castes was made during the census of 1911 when Census Superintendents were instructed to enumerate castes and tribes classed as Hindus who do not conform to certain standards, or are subject to certain disabilities. These disabilities were divided under ten heads, two of which we quote below as generally accepted tests of untouchability :—

> " (7) are denied access to the interior of ordinary Hindu temples,
>
> (8) cause pollution,
>
> (*a*) by touch,
>
> (*b*) within a certain distance."

286. We accept these tests of " untouchability," and our proposals in regard to the " depressed classes " should extend only to those castes who are included in these categories.

287. In 1921 the Census Commissioner prepared a list of " depressed classes " but did not himself lay down any definition for the guidance of provincial superintendents. Nor does it appear from the reports that a classification was made during that census under the ten heads prescribed in 1911. We are indebted to the Census Commissioner (Dr. Hutton) for the following note regarding the procedure adopted in the census of 1931 :—

> " The instructions of the Government of India for the taking of this census concluded with the following enjoinder :—
>
> ' The Government of India also desire that attention should be paid to the collection of information conducive to a better knowledge of the backward and depressed classes and of the problem involved in their present and future welfare.' "
>
> " In that connection the following instructions were issued to the various Superintendents of Census Operations in India :—
>
> ' For this purpose it will be necessary to have a list of castes to be included in depressed classes and all provinces are asked to frame a list applicable to the province. There are very great difficulties in framing a list of this kind and there are insuperable difficulties in framing a list of depressed classes which will be applicable to India as a whole.' "

"A subsequent instruction ran as follows:—

'I have explained depressed castes as castes, contact with whom entails purification on the part of high caste Hindus. It is not intended that the term should have any reference to occupation as such but to those castes which by reason of their traditional position in Hindu society are denied access to temples for instance, or have to use separate wells or are not allowed to sit inside a school house but have to remain outside or which suffer similar social disabilities. These disabilities vary in different parts of India being much more severe in the south of India than elsewhere. At the same time the castes which belong to this class are generally known and can in most parts of India be listed for a definite area, though perhaps the lists for India as a whole will not coincide.'"

"The question of the preparation of lists for each province was discussed at a meeting of the Superintendents of Census Operations in January, 1931, before this census took place. It was agreed that each province should make a list of castes who suffered disability on account of their low social position and on account of being debarred from temples, schools or wells. No specific definition of depressed castes was framed and no more precise instructions were issued to the Superintendents of Census Operations because it was realised that conditions varied so much from province to province and from district to district, even within some provinces that it would be unwise to tie down the Superintendents of Census Operations with too meticulous instructions. The general method of proceeding prescribed was that of local enquiry into what castes were held to be depressed and why, and the framing of a list accordingly. It was decided that Muslims and Christians should be excluded from the term "depressed class" and that, generally speaking, hill and forest tribes, who had not become Hindu but whose religion was returned as tribal, should also be excluded and in the numbers of depressed classes given below these principles have been followed. A note on the depressed and backward classes in Assam submitted to the Franchise Committee by the Superintendent of Census Operations (Mr. Mullan) for that province affords a very clear example of the way in which these principles were intended to be applied and have been applied by Superintendents of Census Operations."

Provincial Estimates of Depressed Classes.

Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces.

288. Local Governments and committees, in response to our request, gave us an estimate of what they considered to be the depressed class population in their respective provinces in accordance

with our definition. In the three provinces, Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces, the distinction between the depressed and other classes of the Hindu community is clearly defined, and there is general agreement between the provincial committees and local Governments in regard to the numbers and castes to be included. We are also satisfied from the replies which we received to our questionnaire and from the statements of witnesses who appeared before us that the numbers for these three provinces are not disputed by other communities in these provinces. The census estimates of 1931 closely correspond to the numbers given to us by the committees. In view of this unanimity we are ourselves prepared to accept the figures given to us as substantially correct, and believe that they are not likely to be open to serious criticism. The estimates of the Bombay Government are based on the investigations of a Committee of officials and non-officials appointed by that Government in 1930 to report on various economic and social problems affecting the depressed classes in that Presidency. Social conditions in the Central Provinces are not very different from those prevailing in Bombay. The figures given by the Government are the result of detailed investigations carried out over a period of eighteen months by the Census Superintendent in consultation with district officers. The tests applied were the same as those which we have now accepted. In the Central Provinces some castes are listed as untouchable in certain districts only. We consider that for electoral purposes they should be treated in these districts as belonging to the depressed classes, and if the same conditions prevail elsewhere, the same principle should be applied. The depressed classes in Madras have already been scheduled by notification under the Madras Local Boards Act of 1920, and there is, we understand, no controversy in the province in regard to the official classification.

Bihar and Orissa.

289. In Bihar and Orissa also there is practical agreement in regard to the castes which should be included in the term "depressed classes." We asked the local Government and the Provincial Committee to give us the numbers of the depressed classes in the province on the basis of untouchability and unapproachability. The Government referred us to a note of their Chief Secretary in which the position of the depressed classes in the province was explained, and which they stated would give all the information available. During the census of 1911, a complete classification was made under the ten categories and, in the note mentioned, the Chief Secretary proceeded to discuss each of those castes with reference to present conditions, and stated that the depressed classes in the province amounted to between five and six millions. He added that the problem of the depressed classes does not exist in an acute form in the province

where the conditions are different from those which obtain in southern India. The Chief Secretary's total includes the Dusadhs numbering 1,300,000 regarding whom he observes as follows:

"They are striving to rise in the social scale. . . . . Educationally they are backward and as a result have few Government posts. They would hardly admit that they are a depressed class except when it is a question of Government appointment." The Provincial Committee, however, states that the Dusadhs are generally regarded as 'untouchable'—all the evidence which we received was to the same effect—and have included them in the list of castes which they have classed as depressed.

290. The Chief Secretary pointed out in his note that the criteria adopted in 1911 led to the inclusion of a large number of aboriginal tribes who are really outside the Hindu religion. These tribes have now been excluded from the Chief Secretary's list of the depressed classes in the province. The Provincial Committee also gave us an estimate based on the census of 1931. They also exclude the aboriginal castes and also Christians, Muslims and Animists, and gave us an estimate of 4·3 millions as the population of depressed classes in the province. In view of the general agreement between the Chief Secretary's list of castes and that of the Provincial Committee it has not been difficult for us to arrive at a final figure for this province. The estimate given by the Provincial Committee is an accurate one based on the census figures of 1931, and we have verified that the total of 4·3 millions is correct. We, therefore, accept this as the estimate of the number of depressed classes in that province who fall under the definition which we have accepted.

Assam.

291. The Assam Government adopted a more elaborate method of classifying the "depressed classes" in the province. They subdivide them into—

(*a*) Hindu exterior castes;
(*b*) aboriginal tribes; and
(*c*) tea-garden labourers.

Under our definition we are only concerned with those included under head (*a*). There is in Assam no caste who, as in Malabar, are "unapproachable," whose touch necessitates immediate purification and who are not allowed to attend schools with other castes. And there are no difficulties worth mentioning in the province as regards the drawing of water from public wells and such other matters. Nevertheless, there is a clear and unmistakeable distinction between the "caste" Hindus and those whom the local Government classed as "exterior castes." The latter, though not literally "untouchable," are yet "unclean" castes, and the main

test that distinguishes them from others is that water touched by them is not acceptable to others. Moreover, these castes, though within the Hindu fold, are not allowed access to temples in which the higher castes worship. There is also the further distinction that members of these castes are generally connected with traditional occupations which are considered by caste Hindus to be degrading. Their touch or shadow is considered to pollute food or water, Brahmins will not officiate at their ceremonies and barbers will not serve them. The Census test of 1911 in regard to access to the interior of Hindu temples applies to the castes designated " exterior castes " in Assam. We have stated the other tests which were applied in order to show that great care has been taken in the classification of these castes and we accept the estimate of the population of " depressed classes " in this province. During our discussions, however, the question was raised regarding the inclusion of two communities, namely, the Suts and Naths of the Assam Valley amongst the " exterior castes." The Provincial Census Superintendent excluded these two castes from his list for the Assam Valley while he included them in the Surma Valley. We referred the matter to the Assam Government and their view was that the matter should be left to the wishes of the two communities, and we suggest that in drawing up a final list this should be done. The total for the exterior castes given by the Census Superintendent is 655,000.

United Provinces, Bengal and the Punjab.

292. As regards the remaining provinces, namely, the United Provinces, Punjab and Bengal, there is no similar agreement between the local Government and the provincial committee in regard to the number who should be classed as " depressed."

(a) United Provinces.

293. The greatest divergence of opinion was revealed in the United Provinces where we received various estimates. The majority of the Provincial Committee came to the conclusion that the only communities which could be classed as " untouchables " in the province number 581,000, and include only three castes, namely, Bhangis, Doms and Dhanuks. The depressed class members question the correctness of the definition, but stated that if it is to be regarded as final, they agree that only the three classes mentioned fall under the definition " depressed." A full account of their views and of those of the Provincial Committee and the local Government will be found in the appendix volume of our Report.

294. The Honourable Mr. E. A. H. Blunt, Member of the Executive Council of the United Provinces, in a note specially prepared for us, estimated the " untouchables " at 9,181,315. But he did not

confine himself to the interpretation of untouchability which we have adopted. He remarks as follows in paragraph 16 of his note :—" In theory, the following practices would make a tribe or caste permanently untouchable, at all events to a Brahmin :—

(1) The following of some unclean profession, such as scavenging.

(2) The keeping of pigs, or the eating of unclean food, such as pork or beef.

(3) Vagrancy, unless there is a settled home to which the tribe or caste occasionally returns.

Reports received in connection with the census of 1931, from the districts, show that the average Brahmin still regards these practices as carrying with them a theoretical stigma of untouchability, even though that stigma, as already explained, may now be lightly regarded. There is, moreover, a marked and growing tendency to make untouchability a personal and not a caste attribute. Formerly every person born into a caste, the members of which followed some degrading practice, was treated as permanently untouchable. At the present day any caste, or any section of a caste, or any individual who has abandoned the practice which made him untouchable, becomes touchable. The village Chamar,* for instance, will remain untouchable so long as he handles dead animals, but the Chamar who has become a saddler (*zingar*), or a cobbler (*mochi*), or a groom (*syce*), is not. This has happened even amongst Bhangis, for there is a case recorded of a municipal latrine cleaner, who having first risen to the rank of jamadar of scavengers, subsequently abandoned that occupation altogether, and is now no longer regarded as untouchable by his fellow-citizens. And all recent evidence suggests that at the present day the castes that would, as a whole, be treated as untouchable are very few—the Bhangi, the Dom, and the wandering tribes ; and these would be untouchable not only to the Brahmin but to all orthodox Hindus. The whole idea of untouchability, in fact, is now fast disappearing." The lists of castes which he includes under his classification are mentioned by him in an appendix to his note.

295. The Government of the United Provinces in their first report observed, with reference to a proposal that the representation of depressed classes should be by nomination, that the Governor "should be guided, though not necessarily restricted, by a schedule of depressed classes which should be drawn up for his use and that this schedule should at least include the following classes. The list is based on the information given in Mr. Blunt's note and it is intended to indicate

* In view of this distinction Mr. Blunt has excluded two million urban Chamars from the list of " untouchables."

those classes for which there can be no doubt that special consideration is required (the components of the group referred to are given in Mr. Blunt's note)."

Dhanuk	127,581
Chamars in rural areas estimated at ..	4,187,770
Bhangi group	349,053
Kolarian group	125,356
Dom group	109,906
Pasi group	1,446,155
Hill Dom	316,012
Vagrant tribes	111,981
Total ..	6,773,814

In their final reply they observed as follows: "Governments are informed that the chairman of the Indian Franchise Committee has given a definition to the chairman of the Provincial Committee which would confine the depressed classes to those who cause "pollution by touch or approach as it exists in this province." If so, the actual number would be reduced to 459,000, and on that definition it would be impossible to secure representation for other than those restricted classes. At the same time the local Government feel that it is necessary to take into consideration classes other than those so defined."

296. A third estimate of 12·6 millions is given by the Census Commissioner. This list is based on instructions issued by the Census Commissioner and quoted in paragraph 287 above. It contains the following classes :—

List A.—Untouchable and depressed.

1. Tribes and castes which are untouchable and depressed on account of their unclean habits chiefly in the matter of diet	2,840,159
2. Vagrant tribes	110,447
3. Those who follow unclean occupations ..	8,253,323
Total ..	11,203,929

List B.—Touchable but depressed.

1. Degraded tribally through their habits and customs	118,433
2. Depressed on account of their traditional occupation	1,269,224
Total ..	1,387,657

These lists were made available to us just before our report was signed and we therefore have had no opportunity of discussing them with the local Government or the Provincial Committee.

(b) Bengal.

297. We asked the local Government and the Provincial Committee to give us a list of the castes and sub-castes together with an estimate of their numbers, which in their opinion are depressed in Bengal, applying the criteria of untouchability and unapproachability. The Government of Bengal stated that the list of castes to be included in the depressed classes was under revision, but forwarded a list of those castes which are at present classed as depressed, with a corresponding list taken from the 1931 census indicating the omissions and additions which have been proposed. They stated that the decision of the Government regarding these additions would be arrived at after ascertaining the views of the castes concerned, but that it would be impossible to come to final conclusions in time for submission to us. They, therefore, adopted the 1921 list and based their replies to our questionnaire on the numbers which were classed as depressed in 1921. The Provincial Committee, on the other hand, stated that according to the criteria laid down by us there was only one caste in Bengal, numbering 72,000, which satisfied the tests. We observe, however, that the Committee which originally left the matter to the local Government have omitted certain castes (Mehtar, Dom and so on) about whose untouchability there is no dispute. The depressed class member on the Committee dissented from this view and submitted to us a separate note in which he gave a list of over 80 castes, which agreed with the list given to us by the Government. This dissenting minute, although it contained the signatures of seven members of the Committee, was subsequently referred to in a letter received by us from four other members to the effect that the note was signed after the Committee had dissolved. It would also appear that those members who signed the dissenting note agreed only in regard to the question of separate representation of the depressed classes. There is no reference to numbers in their own notes. A few days before our report was signed, we received a telegram from the local Government to the effect that up to the date of the telegram the revised figure for depressed classes in the province was 10·3 millions. This total includes the Rajbansis, numbering 1,804,371, who have themselves asked for exclusion, and who, it is generally agreed, should be excluded. Certain hill tribes should also be excluded. The balance will number about 7½ millions. In Bengal a list of castes was drawn up during the 1911 census which satisfied the criteria of untouchability which we have adopted as a general definition. The local Government will, no doubt, examine the varying figures which have been given to us, and we think that there should now be no difficulty in arriving at a final estimate of the numbers after the local Government have completed their

enquiries in regard to the castes which should either continue on or be taken off the list in accordance with their social position at the present time. We, therefore, suggest that on the lines already indicated by us a complete classification should be made of the depressed classes in the province as soon as all the information required by the local Government has been collected. For the present, we give in the table at page 123 the estimates which have been supplied to us.

(c) Punjab.

298. The Government of the Punjab have given us an estimate and also a list of castes, numbering 1·3 millions, who are classed as depressed in the province. This number includes the Ad-Dharmis who say that they are not now Hindus, and the Ramdasis who are said to be Sikhs. In their final report, the majority of the Provincial Committee consider that there are only two castes which satisfy the test of untouchability in the province. A minority of two members accept the estimate given by the Government. Here again there is a complete list of castes in the census report of 1911 which satisfy the two tests which we have adopted as general criteria for estimating the number of depressed classes. In view of the disagreement between the Committee and the Government and of the doubtful position of the Ad-Dharmis and Ramdasis we consider that a further investigation should be made with the help of the list of castes given in 1911, and that a final list should be drawn up of the castes which satisfy the test indicated above.

299. From the summary which we have given above of the information collected by us in these three northern provinces, namely, Bengal, the United Provinces and the Punjab, it is evident that we cannot, in the time at our disposal, give any final figures of the numbers of the depressed classes in them. We have indicated above the general lines on which the investigation should proceed, and we would only add that if the local Government is satisfied that a particular caste or a great majority of a caste does not wish to be treated as a depressed class, its wishes should be respected. Further consideration will be given to the revised lists at the next stage.

300. We subjoin a table showing the estimates of a number of authorities, including those of the Provincial Census Superintendents of each province which have been supplied to us by the Census Commissioner.

THE DEPRESSED CLASSES.

(Figures are in millions.)

Province.	Southborough Committee.	Sir Henry Sharp, 1917.	Census Commissioner, 1921.	Simon Commission.	Census Commissioner, 1931.	Provincial Government, 1932.	Provincial Committee, 1932.	Remarks.
Madras..	6·4	5·7	6·4	6·5	*7·0	7·1	7·1	
Bombay	0·6	1·6	2·8	1·5	1·8	1·7	1·7	
Bengal	9·9	6·7	9·0	11·5	†	‡11·2	0·07	0·07 by some and **11·2 by the others.
United Provinces ..	10·1	8·4	9·0	12·0	12·6	§6·8	0·6	9·2 Mr. Blunt's estimate.
Punjab	1·7	2·1	2·8	2·8	1·3	1·3	‖1·3	
Bihar and Orissa ..	9·4	1·2	8·0	5·0	¶3·7	¶5·8	4·3	
Central Provinces ..	3·8	3·0	3·3	3·3	2·9	2·9	2·9	
Assam	0·3	2·7	2·0	1·0	1·9	0·65	0·65	
Total ..	42·2	31·5	43·3	43·6	—	37·45	18·62	

* Approximate. Precise figures not available.
† Not available. The figure supplied by the local Government from Census returns is 10,311,268.
‡ Under revision. 1921 basis.
§ Including castes for which special representation is proposed.
‖ Figures furnished by the minority. The majority have given no estimate.
¶ Approximate.
** Includes Rajbansis (1·4) and hill tribes. The whole matter is under investigation.

Enfranchisement.

301. We now turn to the second question referred to us, as to "the extent to which the depressed classes will be likely, through such general extension of the franchise as we may recommend, to secure the right to vote in ordinary electorates." Though there is wide difference of opinion in some provinces regarding the castes which should be classified as depressed, there is no dispute that the depressed classes constitute a substantial portion of the population of India as a whole. Taking the mean of the estimates in the foregoing table, they number roughly 35 millions out of a total population of 257 millions. They have in recent years made their mass influence felt in matters which for centuries have been outside their traditional sphere and customary limits. With the advent of responsible government and the awakening of political consciousness amongst these people we consider it of the highest importance that they should have the means of expressing their needs and opinions in the new councils.

302. When we consider, however, what number of the depressed classes will qualify for registration on the electoral roll under our general franchise proposals, we are confronted by a difficulty. As their name implies, the great majority of the depressed classes will have at present neither the minimum property nor the educational qualifications we propose. That does not apply universally. As "untouchability" is a social or religious and not an economic test a considerable number of the depressed classes will find their way on to the electoral roll, for in some provinces numbers of them are both prosperous and well educated. But it is certain that they will not, on the general franchise qualification, secure admission to the electoral rolls in numbers proportionate to their population.

303. It is impossible to say with any approach to accuracy what will be the number of the depressed classes who will be enfranchised under our proposals. The figure will not be disclosed until the roll itself is prepared. But we asked the various provincial governments to give us the closest estimate they can, taking for the purpose the definition of untouchability given above. Only three provinces (Madras, Bombay and the United Provinces) were able to give us estimates for the province as a whole. In the other provinces an analysis has been made in one or two typical constituencies and we summarise the results below.

304. In Madras, where the percentage of the depressed class population is 15, the total number of depressed class electors that will come on the roll under the general qualification for the province will be approximately 366,000 or 5 per cent. of the total number of voters and 6 per cent. of the non-Muslim voters. In Bombay, the depressed classes form 8 per cent. of the population, and the probable depressed class electorate is 65,000, or 2 per cent. of the

total electorate and 2·5 per cent. of the non-Muslim electorate. In the United Provinces, where the percentage of the depressed class population (on the Government's definition as explained in paragraph 295 above, and in the footnote to the statement on page 123) is about 14, nearly 644,000 voters will get on the roll. This gives them a percentage of 8·6 of the total electorate or 9·2 per cent. of the non-Muslim electors.

305. In the Nagpur district of the Central Provinces where the depressed class population is 24 per cent., or 6 points above the average for the province, the probable voting strength on the rent or the revenue qualification of Rs. 10 proposed by us will be 10 per cent. On the other hand, in the Khulna district of Bengal, where the percentage of the depressed class population to the non-Muslim population is 66·3, the percentage of depressed class voters to the non-Muhammadan voters will be 62. The Government of Bengal stated that similar results are likely to be obtained in seven other districts. In the remaining districts, however, they state that there is no chance of the depressed classes being able to return their representatives through a general constituency. The Government of Bihar and Orissa have analysed the voting strength of different communities in three urban and eight rural areas, and inform us that 5 per cent. of the depressed classes would be enfranchised in these areas, taken together, on the general franchise qualifications proposed by us, namely, six annas chaukidari tax. In the three urban areas, the voting strength of the depressed classes is 5·4 per cent. of the non-Muslim electorate and in the rural areas 9·1 per cent., against a population percentage of 11·4 for the province as a whole. The Provincial Committee also sent us the same figures and state that they do not feel justified in drawing any definite inference from them in regard to the enfranchisement of the depressed classes in the province as a whole. The census statistics district by district were not available to the Assam Government during our enquiry and they were, therefore, unable to supply us with an analysis of probable voters by caste. They reported subsequently that in five districts the depressed classes, as defined* by them, will probably, on the basis of the enfranchisement of 10 per cent. of the population, have a voting strength varying from 10 per cent. to 13 per cent. of their population. The percentage in the other three districts will be 9·5, 8 and 6 respectively. The Government of the Punjab have not been able to supply us with any statistics bearing on this point.

306. It is impossible, therefore, for us to give an exact estimate of the numbers of the depressed classes who will, under our proposals, secure the right to vote in ordinary electorates. It is true that in

*In these calculations are included ex-tea garden labourers and backward tribes who do not fall within our definition of depressed classes.

certain limited areas they may obtain enough voters to form a majority or at least a considerable minority of voters in a single constituency. We have already referred to the position in Bengal. In the Central Provinces the depressed classes form a large proportion of the tenantry in the three eastern districts and in one of these districts they will form 32 per cent. of the total electorate. On the other hand, in the Madras Presidency and in the Mahratta country in Bombay and the Central Provinces they are generally found fairly evenly distributed in all the districts. In the other provinces, with the exception of the Punjab, the evidence which we have received is to the effect that there is no concentration of these communities in particular districts or tracts, but that they are diffused throughout the general population. In the Punjab they are found mostly in the southern and the eastern districts where the Hindus predominate. But these qualifications do not detract from the fact that the depressed classes will, under our proposals, except in some districts of Bengal, obtain representation on the electoral roll in a ratio far below their population figures, and that they will not be able, in most constituencies, to exercise any influence over the elections proportionate to their population.

307. We have referred in the opening Chapters of this Report to the administrative difficulties in the way of extending the franchise more widely than we propose, and it seems clear to us that under any system of franchise which can be devised within this limit, the voting strength of the depressed classes in proportion to their population must fall far short of that of other well-defined communities. The Indian Statutory Commission remarked :—" in the long run, the progress of the depressed classes, so far as it can be secured by the exercise of political influence, will depend on their getting a position of sufficient importance for other elements to seek their support and to consider their needs." Political influence is largely wielded by the vote, and whatever system of representation is ultimately decided upon for them, we are of opinion that their interests as well as those of the country at large will be best served by bringing on the electoral rolls of the provinces a larger proportion of the depressed classes than our general proposals will now secure. We, therefore, recommend that some form of differential franchise should be devised whereby the levelling up of the depressed class vote may be possible. With this end in view, we specially invited consideration in our original questionnaire of the possibility of the application of the group system of representation to them. For the reasons given in the earlier part of this Report we are unable to recommend the group system. A variety of proposals have also been put before us which we summarise below :—

(*a*) The enfranchisement of village servants ;
(*b*) the bare literacy qualification ;
(*c*) the household unit scheme ;

(*d*) the two-vote system ;
(*e*) the enfranchisement of wives of depressed class voters ;
(*f*) some reduction of the standard property qualification.

We discuss the merits and demerits of each of these proposals below :—

(a) Village servants.

308. The Government of the Central Provinces recommend that all village watchmen who number roughly 50,000 should be enfranchised. They suggest this qualification on the analogy of the existing qualification of other village officials such as the *lambardar*, *patel* and *patwari*. The Bombay Provincial Committee recommended a similar extension to the village servants in that province. In their subsequent report, however, they propose the household unit scheme, which we describe below, in preference to their original proposal. In other provinces no similar proposals have been made. The merit of this scheme is that in Bombay and the Central Provinces the post of village watchman is a hereditary one, and is always held by a member of the depressed classes. We also understand that in the Madras Presidency there are three kinds of village servants, namely, the *Talayaris*, numbering 32,000, and *Vettis* and *Nirgantis*, who together number about 31,000, and that most of the latter and some of the former belong to the depressed classes. We understand that there is elsewhere no similar system of hereditary office confined to the depressed classes. But we recommend that in Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces the proposal should be given effect to as a suitable means of bringing on the rolls members of the depressed class communities who would not otherwise be enfranchised, but who are likely to be able to exercise their vote intelligently. We note that this expedient would bring very few women on to the roll.

(b) Bare literacy.

309. The literate population of the depressed classes in the Punjab according to the 1931 census is 10,384 (9,252 males and 1,132 females), and in the United Provinces 41,901 (38,366 males and 3,535 females) and in Bihar and Orissa 31,586 (29,603 males and 1,983 females). These figures refer to literates of five years of age and over, and we are unable to say how many of them will come on the electoral roll. We were unable to obtain figures for the other provinces, but we were informed by the Census Commissioner that we might safely assume that depressed class literates of the age of 20 and over would nowhere exceed 2 per cent. of the depressed class population. We see no administrative difficulty in the application of this qualification. As in the case of women it could be arranged that members of the depressed classes desiring to be placed on the roll should satisfy the proper authority that they were literate by the production of a

certificate from an authority appointed by Government, such as a magistrate, a schoolmaster, or a school inspector. Its advocates have put this suggestion forward on the ground that it would encourage the spread of education amongst the depressed classes. On the other hand, it has been urged that as it is a qualification which we have proposed for women it would be inappropriate to extend it only to depressed class men.

(c) The household unit scheme.

310. The basis of the scheme is briefly that every household or family belonging to the " depressed classes " should be taken as a unit for electoral purposes, and allowed to select one representative for entry on the electoral roll. If, however, the member of the household so selected is already on the roll under the general property qualification, the family would not have a second vote. In other words, there would be one voter for each depressed class family. This suggestion, again, has found no support except with the Bombay Provincial Committee. Its chief advantage is that it spreads the voting power uniformly over the whole community. Its disadvantages are, firstly, that the preparation of a roll of depressed class households would throw a great burden on the administrative machine at the time of the preparation of the electoral rolls; secondly, that it would not bring any appreciable number of depressed class women on the electoral roll, and thirdly, that the system would add about 6 to 8 million voters to the rolls throughout India, and that it would enfranchise a larger proportion of the depressed classes than of other sections of the population. This addition to the electorate which we have proposed might lead to an administrative breakdown, but the difficulty would be lessened if the scheme were applied only in rural areas.

(d) The two-vote system.

311. The Madras Government and Committee both suggested that the " depressed class " voters should have a vote in a separate depressed class constituency, and also in the general non-Muhammadan constituency. By this means the voting strength of the 366,000 depressed class voters who would come upon the rolls under their proposals would be doubled so as to form about 10 per cent. of the total depressed class population. Their object also appears to have been to secure some direct representation for the depressed class in the legislature, without a complete communal separation of the depressed classes, from the rest of the non-Muslim community. We put their suggestion to some of the other Governments

and committees, but the only support we received for it was from the Central Provinces Government, who somewhat hesitatingly agreed to it, but doubt whether the concession would prove of any value.

The suggestion has also been made that even if there are no separate electorates, the depressed class voter should have two votes in general electorates. The chief advantage of the scheme is that it would increase the voting strength without any additional burden on the administration. The objection, however, has been strongly urged that it will merely have the effect of doubling the vote of persons already enfranchised and that by confining the vote to the richer section of the depressed classes only, it would fail to carry out the spirit of the Prime Minister's instructions.

(e) Wives of voters.

312. The proposal to enfranchise the wives of all depressed class voters was made to us towards the end of our enquiries and we were not able to ascertain the views of the local Governments or provincial committees in regard to it, nor have any witnesses suggested it to us. The supporters of the scheme urge that the system would not only increase the numerical strength of the depressed class electorate but that it would also bring a large number of women on the electoral rolls, a result which in their opinion is not likely to be achieved either by a property or by a literacy qualification. On the other hand, the proposal has evoked very strong criticism. It is pointed out that it is very undesirable to pick out for enfranchisement women from the highest and from the lowest strata of society while leaving out a very large number of middle-class women. Further, as in the case of the double vote, it would concentrate the voting power among a single section of the depressed class communities, and so tend to the gradual formation of a dominant political section amongst them. It has also been urged that an electoral system which denies the vote to one man and gives it to the wife of another man who already has it, is bound to cause great discontent among the various sections of the depressed classes who may infer that sufficient thought has not been bestowed on the general needs of the community.

(f) Lower property qualification.

313. This proposal was also made to us towards the end of our enquiries and we were not able to obtain the views of local Governments and committees in regard to it. In Madras, Bengal and Bihar and Orissa, where our franchise scheme is based on the payment of a minimum tax, there is no possibility of the application of this proposal. In other provinces, however, where the qualifications rest on the payment of rent or land revenue, it might be possible to

lower the qualification still further in the case of the depressed classes so as to bring a larger number of them on the electoral rolls. The main objection to this scheme is that it would create a considerable amount of work for the staff engaged in preparing the electoral rolls, as it would be necessary to pick out the members of the depressed classes from a very large number of others who would be shown in the revenue rolls as possessing the lowered qualifications. In many cases this might involve personal enquiries from the revenue payers.

314. Some of our number, including Dr. Ambedkar, disapprove wholly of methods (*d*) and (*e*) of increasing the depressed class electorate. They prefer a limited electorate in which the electoral power is evenly distributed to an enlarged electorate in which electoral power is overweighted in favour of one or the other element of the depressed class population. Other members of our Committee however feel that these may be the only ways of adding to the depressed class electorate.

Our conclusions.

315. We think that the village servant qualification should in any case be adopted in Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces. Every effort should be made in all provinces to bring the depressed class electorate up to their population ratio, or in any event as near as possible to 10 per cent. of their population strength, except in Bihar and Orissa where the general proportion of enfranchisement is only nine per cent, of the total population. For this purpose we regard the literacy qualification as the most suitable means to employ in the first instance. We would leave full discretion to local Governments as to the further measures which they should adopt if such measures are necessary to produce a satisfactory level of enfranchisement. Conditions vary greatly in different parts of India, and the objections which have been pressed on us in regard to any particular scheme may have less weight in some provinces, while on the other hand local conditions may discount the advantages which have been urged in regard to another scheme. We would, therefore, ask local Governments to examine in detail each scheme, and adopt, if it is found necessary to do so, whichever they think is the most suitable for their province. In any event, we repeat that it is of the greatest importance that the voting strength of the community should, by one or other of these means, be raised in each province as nearly as possible to the proportion which we have suggested above.

CHAPTER XI.—REPRESENTATION OF MINOR MINORITIES AND SPECIAL INTERESTS IN THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES.

Minor Minorities.

316. A complete and detailed scheme for the composition of each of the provincial legislatures must deal with the representation of the Europeans, the Indian Christians and the Anglo-Indians. With the possible exception of the Indian Christians in parts of Madras none of these communities could secure representation in the provincial legislatures through the general constituencies. The provincial Governments and committees have, broadly speaking, recommended that these communities should continue to be represented in the new constitution. It is impossible for us to make any recommendations as to the numbers of seats which should be allotted to them pending a decision of the communal question and of the size of the legislatures which depends upon it. But the majority of us agree in principle that representation should be secured to them in the new legislatures.

Special Interests.

317. The special interests at present represented in the provincial legislatures, other than women and labour, with which we deal separately elsewhere in this Report, fall into three groups:

(*i*) commerce and industry,
(*ii*) landholders,
(*iii*) universities.

The first of these groups covers European trade and commerce, Indian trade and commerce, planting, mining, and other special constituencies such as that at present reserved for the cotton trade in the Bombay Provincial Council.

318. In the absence of a communal settlement, it is not possible for us to do more than discuss the general basis upon which, in our view, representation should be accorded to these interests, though in accordance with the suggestions of the Round Table Conference we make certain tentative proposals as to the number of seats to be reserved in the case of all three groups.

(i) Commerce and Industry.

319. The representation at present accorded in the various provincial legislative councils to commerce, industry and the allied subjects of mining, planting, the cotton trade, etc., is shown in the tabular statement appended to this chapter. It will be seen that

a not unsubstantial representation is accorded to those interests and the evidence before us almost without exception supports the view that they should continue to receive separate representation in the new legislatures.

320. It is unnecessary to emphasise the importance of securing the presence in those legislatures of men, Indian and European, qualified to speak with knowledge and authority on the economic issues before the legislatures on the bearing of tariff and other laws on the international market and on the variety of other subjects connected with trade, commerce and industry which call for expert consideration from time to time. The suggestion has been made that the general constituencies can be relied on to return in sufficient numbers members whose experience is such as to enable them to speak with authority on commerical and industrial questions and that special representation for commerce and industry is unnecessary in the new legislatures. We are unable to accept this view. Functional representation is assuming increasing importance under modern conditions, and the arguments in favour of making special provision for the presence in legislative bodies of business and economic experts is in our judgment a strong one. While general constituencies may not infrequently return individuals whose knowledge and experience is such that they can make contributions of value in discussions on commercial and industrial questions, those members speak primarily as representatives of their general constituency, and they may on occasion find that the claims of that constituency are difficult to reconcile with a wholly dispassionate examination of particular economic issues. There is moreover no certainty that persons qualified to speak with authority on these largely technical matters will be returned through the general constituencies. The danger that in the absence of special representation for commerce and industry the new legislatures may find themselves deprived of expert advice when it is most needed is in our view a real one. The civil service which advises the ministers has indeed an expert and intimate knowledge of the ordinary administration of the country. But its members have, as a general rule, no first hand experience of those great commercial, industrial, and banking undertakings which play a rapidly increasing part in the life of every community in the modern world. It is therefore in our considered view desirable in order that the legislature may be better equipped to deal with economic subjects, that a certain number of seats should be filled by representatives of commerce and industry, who will speak in the legislatures from the expert and technical point of view.

321. While for the reasons we have given we favour the continued representation of commerce and industry in the legislatures, we are impressed by the criticism that such special interests should not form a block of such a size or such a character as seriously to affect the

balance of parties formed by representatives of territorial con stituencies and so of the general mass of the population. Our object is essentially to make expert knowledge available in the legislatures and not to give any particular voting strength to individual interests.

322. We recommend, in these circumstances, the retention of the seats at present allotted to commerce, industry, and trade in the provincial legislatures, without any proportionate increase in their number consequent on such increase in the size of those legislatures as may ultimately be approved.

323. We have given consideration to the claims for special representation advanced by organisations speaking for trade and commerce in various provinces other than those already represented. The commercial and industrial organisations now recognised for the purpose of representation in the legislatures are, in our view, fully capable of representing the interests of industry and commerce as such. We do not, in these circumstances, recommend any increase in the number of the existing constituencies. But we think that the desirability of some rearrangement or redistribution of those constituencies should be further examined at the stage of the delimitation of constituencies generally.

Method of representation of commerce.

324. As regards the method of representation of commerce, we are satisfied that the method of representation through associations has worked fairly satisfactorily in the past and we recommend that it should be continued in the future. We are of opinion that those special commercial and industrial interests which are at present represented by nomination should in future be represented by election by the appropriate association. It has been pointed out that in some cases the rules of those associations which are recognised for the purpose of electing members to the legislatures might be so applied as seriously to affect their representative character. We have no evidence that this has in fact occurred, but we consider that the point should be borne in mind, and the position reconsidered, if it should at any time appear to Government that they are no longer representative of the interests assigned to them.

325. The Chambers of Commerce in Bombay and the United Provinces draw attention to a defect in the existing electoral rules, which make it necessary for the firms which are members of the Chambers to nominate a representative to vote and act on their behalf in connection with elections to legislative bodies. Frequent changes in the personnel of partners, directors or managers may

result in disfranchising many firms at the time when an election takes place. It is suggested that the name of the firm should appear on the electoral roll, and that the firm should depute someone to act on its behalf in an electoral capacity. We think that the point is one which merits consideration.

326. We have carefully considered a suggestion made to us that Indian and European business organisations should elect their representatives through a joint electorate. There has, however, been no demand from the Indian commercial community for joint representation, while we are satisfied that the European Chambers of Commerce are at present averse from joint electorates. In the circumstances, we feel that unless and until a mutual understanding is reached between European and Indian commerce, we should not be justified in modifying the existing position.

Our detailed recommendations.

327. We think it desirable to explain briefly, before setting out our detailed recommendations, the reasons which have led us to our conclusions in the case of the following seats :—

(*i*) There is at present no active mining interest in the Central Provinces and we therefore accept the recommendation of the local Government that the seat at present reserved for mining should be abolished.

(*ii*) In the case of Madras, the Madras Chamber of Commerce and the Madras Trades Association have agreed to combine for the purpose of returning their quota of representatives in the council. We recognise the diversity of interests as between trade and commerce. But in the special circumstances of Madras, and having regard to the agreement in question, and to the fact that in the Punjab the representation of trade and commerce has been amalgamated since 1920, we recommend the amalgamation of trade and commerce in the present case, and the retention by the combined interest of its present quota of representatives.

(*iii*) The Government of Bombay recommend the abolition of the seat at present reserved in the provincial legislative council for the cotton trade but do not assign any reason for their recommendation. The Provincial Committee favour its retention but consider that it should be filled by election (by a method to be devised) and not as at present, by nomination. We are, on the whole, disposed to accept the view of the Provincial Committee and propose accordingly that the seat should be retained, but on an elective basis.

Existing constituencies in provincial legislatures.

328. Subject to the modifications indicated in the preceding paragraph, the list of existing constituencies is as follows :—

Provincial Legislatures.

	No. of seats.
Madras.	
Madras Chamber of Commerce and Madras Trades Association	3
South Indian Chamber of Commerce	1
Natukottai Nagarathars Association	1
Madras Planters	1
Bombay.	
Bombay Chamber of Commerce	2
Karachi Chamber of Commerce	1
Bombay Trades Association	1
Bombay Millowners' Association	1
Ahmedabad Millowners' Association	1
Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau ..	1
Cotton Trade	1
Bengal.	
Bengal Chamber of Commerce	6
Indian Jute Mills Association	2
Indian Mining Association	1
Indian Tea Association	1
Calcutta Trades Association	1
Bengal National Chamber of Commerce	2
Bengal Marwari Association	1
Bengal Mahajana Sabha	1
United Provinces.	
Upper India Chamber of Commerce	2
United Provinces Chamber of Commerce.. ..	1
Punjab.	
Punjab Chamber of Commerce and Trades Association	1
Punjab Industries	1

Bihar and Orissa.	No. of seats.
Indian Mining Association	1
Indian Mining Federation	1
Planters	1
Industries other than planting and mining ..	1
Central Provinces.	
Commerce and Industry	2
Assam.	
Planters	5
Commerce and Industry	1

We think this list should be retained, subject to any rearrangement or redistribution which may be found desirable on the closer examination which will be made at the stage of delimitation of the constituencies.

(ii) Landlords.

329. The special representation at present allotted to the great landlords in the provincial legislatures is shown in the tabular statement appended to this chapter. As will be seen, a total of thirty-two seats is at present reserved for them in provinces other than Assam, the numbers varying from six in Madras and the United Provinces to three in the Central Provinces and Bombay.

330. The Statutory Commission expressed the view that the owners of the larger estates who are in the electorate of the special landlords constituencies are at present returned to the legislatures through the general constituencies in such numbers that "the special protection now furnished may safely be withdrawn." They added, however, that if this recommendation was accepted, and if landlord candidates failed to secure through the general constituencies the proportion of seats at present reserved for them, power should be given to nominate members of the landlord class up to that proportion. The recommendation of the Statutory Commission found support neither from the provincial governments concerned nor from the Government of India.

331. The question is one which has figured largely in our discussions in the various provinces which we have visited. While a section of public opinion is averse from recognition of the special claims of landlords, local Governments and provincial committees, though not always unanimously, have without exception recommended the retention of the representation at present accorded either at its present strength or with an increase proportionate to the increase proposed in the size of the legislatures.

332. The considered view of the majority of our Committee is in favour of retaining special representation for landlords. The franchise which we recommend is such that in the provinces as in

the federal legislature, representation will become increasingly popular in character, and the chances of the great landlords securing return in the future through the general constituencies correspondingly less. We are satisfied, moreover, that the abolition of the special representation at present accorded at a time when the representation of other special interests is retained and when both the electorate and the size of the legislatures are being increased, would give rise to a not illfounded sense of grievance. Finally, the existing landlord electorates in the different provinces consist in the main of men of position who exercise an important influence in the countryside, who have the leisure and the means to travel and acquire experience beyond their own locality, and who are well qualified to speak with authority on matters affecting agriculture and rural life—questions which will inevitably bulk prominently in the business of the provincial legislatures.

333. While for these reasons we regard it as important to retain special representation for landlords as an interest, we are of opinion that here, as in the case of the other special interests, representation should not be on such a scale as to affect the balance of parties in the legislatures. We recommend in these circumstances that the present number of landlord constituencies should be retained, but that the number of seats at present allotted to them should not be increased in proportion to such increase in the size of the various provincial legislatures as may ultimately be approved. The possible redistribution or rearrangement of the landlord constituencies should be further examined at the stage when the constituencies generally are being delimited.

(iii) Universities.

334. Seats are reserved for universities in the present legislative councils in every province except Assam where there is as yet no university. The general sense of the Committee is in favour of the continuation of the special representation at present accorded to these bodies, and, so far as evidence on the subject has been tendered to us, this view has met with general support from provincial Governments and provincial committees. In the case of the University of Nagpur, the local Government originally expressed the opinion that special representation was not necessary. It was ascertained that their view was based on the fact that the university representative had not in the past ordinarily been a representative of learning, and they subsequently indicated that in the event of the electorate for the university seat being changed from the graduates to the senate, they would have no objection to its retention.

335. We are not unanimous as to the composition of the electorate for university seats. The majority of us consider, however, that the balance of advantage rests with election by the registered

graduates and not by the senate or the court alone, one important argument in favour of this view being the fact that in many cases the senate is largely formed by nomination.

336. Some provinces have recommended the amalgamation of university seats, and this question should be further considered at the stage of the delimitation of constituencies.

Our recommendation.

337. A list showing our final recommendations is appended :—

	Land-holders.	Universi-ties.	Commerce and industry (including Planting and Mining).	
Madras ..	6	1	6	(European commerce and trade 3 Indian commerce .. .. 2 Planting .. .. .. 1)
Bombay ..	3	1	8	(European commerce and trade 4 Indian commerce .. .. 3 Cotton trade .. .. .. 1)
Bengal ..	5	2	15	(Bengal Chamber of Commerce. 6 Indian Jute Mills Association 2 Indian Mining Association .. 1 Indian Tea Association .. 1 Calcutta Trades Association.. 1 Bengal National Chamber of Commerce. 2 Bengal Marwari Association.. 1 Bengal Mahajana Sabha .. 1)
United Provinces.	6	1	3	(Upper India Chamber of Commerce. 2 United Provinces Chamber of Commerce. 1)
Punjab ..	4	1	2	(Punjab Chamber of Commerce and Trades Association. 1 Punjab Industries .. .. 1)
Bihar and Orissa.	5	1	4	(Indian Mining Association .. 1 Indian Mining Federation .. 1 Planters .. .. .. 1 Industries other than Planting and Mining. 1)
Central Provinces.	3	1	*2	(Commerce and Industry .. 2)
Assam ..	—	—	6	(Planters .. .. .. 5 Commerce and Industry .. 1)

*In addition one seat is at present reserved for Mining, as to which reference is invited to paragraph 327 (i) above.

338. Some of our number have felt considerably hampered in dealing with the questions discussed in this chapter by the fact that the communal issue has not yet been decided, and they reserve the right to reconsider our recommendations in the light of the decision that may eventually be reached.

CHAPTER XII.—ABORIGINAL AND HILL TRIBES.

339. The aboriginal population of British India is over 5 millions. They are found chiefly in the highlands and hills of Bihar and Orissa, the Punjab, the Central Provinces, Assam, Bengal, Madras and Bombay. Our proposals for the extension of the general franchise will bring only a negligible number on to the electoral rolls. It is, in our opinion, of the greatest importance that the interests of these people, who live a life entirely apart from the rest of the population of India, should be protected by effective representation in the councils, or, if this is not possible, by some other arrangement in the new constitution.

340. The Government of Bihar and Orissa stated that, partly because of the village system in aboriginal areas and partly because of the community of interest between all the residents, the group system of elections might prove specially successful in the aboriginal areas; and that many persons well acquainted with the aboriginal tracts of the province are in favour of introducing such a system. The Government of the Central Provinces pointed out that the aboriginal tribes in the province are an extremely backward community and cannot expect to obtain any representation at all through the general constituencies. They, therefore, recommended that, as no method of electing a representative is possible, provision should be made whereby the Governor could nominate a suitable person as spokesman in the council for these tribes. The Government of Assam suggested the creation of special constituencies for these communities, but we have received no recommendations from the other provinces in which the matter requires consideration.

341. The only possible alternative to nomination is a system of election by the local village headmen in certain districts. We commend it to the attention of the local Governments of Assam, Bihar and Orissa, the Central Provinces, and possibly Madras. A serious difficulty is the lack of suitable candidates from among these classes themselves, but it is possible that an electorate formed of headmen would be sufficiently intelligent to see that their representative, even if not an aboriginal himself, would be capable of looking after their interests in the legislatures. We strongly recommend the adoption of some method of election, if found to be practicable, in preference to nomination.

342. The only evidence which we have been able to hear on the subject was from the Chota Nagpur Improvement Society of Bihar and Orissa and from the Census Commissioner for India and the Census Superintendent of the Central Provinces. They pressed upon us the view that the aboriginals are an entirely distinct community

from the depressed classes and that under no circumstances should the two communities be amalgamated for purposes of representation. We have already suggested that this view should be accepted.

343. We have been unable in the time at our disposal to make any adequate investigation of this subject, and cannot therefore put forward any definite proposals. The matter should be further examined in detail by the local governments concerned and brought up at a later stage when the time comes for the delimitation of constituencies.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE MILITARY SERVICE QUALIFICATION FOR THE FRANCHISE.

The origin of the military service qualification.

344. The Franchise Committee of 1919, as a result of their enquiries, recommended the enfranchisement of all retired and pensioned officers of the Indian Army, whether of commissioned or non-commissioned rank, and the draft provincial electoral rules submitted to Parliament contained provisions based on this recommendation. When these rules came under consideration in the House of Commons, an amendment was moved and accepted by His Majesty's Government suggesting the enfranchisement for provincial legislative councils of all retired, pensioned, and discharged officers, non-commissioned officers, or soldiers of His Majesty's regular forces. A provision to this effect was included in the provincial electoral rules as finally approved by Parliament in 1920.

Our enquiries.

345. We thought it desirable in connection with our investigation of the general basis of the franchise, to ascertain the views of local governments and provincial committees on the desirability of the retention of the military service qualification. We took the opportunity to invite their opinion on a suggestion made in the course of discussion in the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference, that that qualification should be so extended as to cover service in the Indian Auxiliary and Indian Territorial Forces. We have also received a suggestion that military interests should be accorded special representation as such in the provincial and the central legislatures, and with this we deal below. We proceed to examine the questions referred to above *seriatim*.

I.—Retention of the existing military service qualification.

346. As explained above, the existing military service qualification for the franchise operates in respect only of provincial legislatures, and of retired, pensioned, or discharged officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of His Majesty's regular forces. Save in the Punjab,

the numbers enfranchised under it appear to be small. It has not been possible to obtain final statistics from all provinces. The returns received may be summarised as follows :—

Madras, a maximum of 20,000 not independently qualified.
Bombay, 5,146.
Bengal, 618.
Punjab, 190,000 approximately.
Bihar and Orissa, 1,517.
Central Provinces, 275.
Assam, 325 in Shillong urban constituency.

The numbers elsewhere are stated to be negligible.

Information is not readily available in the case of the United Provinces, but we were informed that the numbers affected were negligible.

Our recommendations.

347. The representative of the Army Department of the Government of India who gave evidence before us expressed the opinion that the withdrawal of the existing military service qualification for the provincial legislatures would be likely to give rise to resentment in the army. All local governments and provincial committees agree to its retention, and the majority of us accept their unanimous recommendation.

II.—Extension of the existing military service qualification to service in the Indian Auxiliary and Indian Territorial Forces.

348. The problem is one of relatively small dimensions. We are informed that the total authorised strength of the Indian Auxiliary Force and the Indian Territorial Force is as follows :—

Auxiliary Force, India—33,000 (including railway units of an authorised strength of 15,000).

Indian Territorial Force—20,000 (including University Training Corps units of an authorised strength of 5,000).

Views of local Governments and Provincial Committees.

349. The views of local governments and their provincial committees reveal a wide diversity of opinion on important points of detail even in those cases in which extension is accepted in principle. The Government of Madras and the Committee think any extension unnecessary. The Government of the Punjab are definitely opposed to it. The remaining local governments and committees are prepared to accept the principle of extension subject to various qualifications. The Government of Bombay and the Provincial Committee agree to

the extension of the franchise to persons who at the time of the preparation of the electoral roll are able to produce a certificate that their names are borne on the strength of the auxiliary or territorial forces; to those ex-members of either force who hold the long service medal or the volunteer decoration; and to those members of the University Training Corps who can produce a certificate that they have completed two years' approved training. The Government of Bengal see no objection to extension to ex-members of the auxiliary and territorial forces subject to a minimum of four years' service in the case of the former and of six years' service in the case of the latter. But they regard the extension of the franchise to serving soldiers, whether regular, auxiliary, or territorial, as undesirable. The Bengal Committee have no objection to extension so long as the franchise is not conferred on the students in any educational institution.

350. The Government of the United Provinces and the Committee agree in principle to extension, but do not enter into details. The same is true of the local Government and the Committee in the Central Provinces. In Bihar and Orissa neither the Government nor the Committee hold any strong view. The Committee agree that if the qualification is retained for ex-regular personnel, it should be extended to the auxiliary and the territorial forces. The Government are prepared to follow the example of the provinces in which the problem is one of greater importance. The Government of Assam and the Provincial Committee would restrict the extension of the franchise to serving members of either force and the Government would impose an additional restriction that the efficiency test "should have been passed in the previous year." We ascertained in the course of discussion with the representatives of Assam that they were apprehensive that persons might join the auxiliary or territorial forces merely in order to qualify for the vote and then resign, and that it was on this ground that they were opposed to the extension of the military service qualification to ex-members.

Our recommendation.

351. It will be seen from the summary of the views of local governments that it is impossible to apply any uniform principle which would be universally acceptable in this matter. From a different standpoint, extension raises questions of principle of some difficulty. The existing electoral rules give the franchise only to ex-soldiers and ex-officers of the regular forces, and serving personnel are not enfranchised as such. No local government and no committee has recommended the extension of the military service qualification to the serving soldier of the regular forces, and the Army Department of the Government of India have definitely indicated their strong opposition to any such extension on grounds of principle. There are obvious objections to the grant of the vote to

serving members of the auxiliary or territorial forces when it is for obvious reasons refused to serving regular soldiers; and we agree with the Government of India as to the case against any such extension.

III.—Extension of the military service qualification to ex-members of the Indian Auxiliary and Indian Territorial Forces.

352. Under Section 17 of the Indian Auxiliary Force Act a member of that force may obtain his discharge when he has attained the age of 45 or has completed four years' service in the force. Similarly, a member of the Indian Territorial Force is entitled to receive his discharge, under Section 8 of the Indian Territorial Force Act, on the expiration of the period for which he was enrolled, or earlier subject to such conditions as may be prescribed. The difficulties of principle which arise in the case of serving members of the territorial and auxiliary forces do not admittedly arise as regards ex-members of those forces, though having regard to the long period of service of the regular officer or soldier who at present benefits by the military service qualification, it would seem desirable, in the event of the franchise being extended to such ex-members to prescribe a minimum period of qualifying service such for instance as that suggested by the Government of Bengal. One effect of such a minimum period of qualifying service would be to exclude members of the Officers Training Corps. We are, however, impressed by the argument adduced to us in this connection by the Government of India, that these corps, unlike the rest of the territorial force, are not liable to military service, and that the extension to them of a privilege such as now under consideration would in any event be undesirable.

Our recommendation.

353. We have already indicated that we are opposed to the grant of the vote in any circumstances to serving military personnel as such, whether regular, auxiliary, or territorial. We are on the whole of opinion that having regard to the very different conditions of service of the regular soldier and the member of the auxiliary or territorial force, there is no real justification for the extension of the military service qualification to these forces. Moreover, the wide extension of the franchise which we now propose, and in particular the establishment of an easy educational qualification, will, so far as we can judge, result in the enfranchisement of the great majority if not of all, of those members of the auxiliary and the territorial forces who are not already enfranchised. A wide difference of opinion on material points of detail exists as to the conditions on which the franchise should be extended to those forces; and in the circumstances we are of opinion that the balance of the advantage rests

with leaving matters as they are, and that a decision not to extend the military service qualification to ex-members of the auxiliary and territorial forces will not result in depriving any important section of the community of the franchise.

IV.—Special military constituencies.

354. We have received a request from a number of members of the central legislature urging the creation of special constituencies of a non-communal character to represent military interests in the provincial and central legislatures, the number of such constituencies in each province to be fixed on the basis of the number of men serving in the army from that province. The specific suggestion is made that five seats should be allotted to the Punjab (one for each civil division) in the provincial council and two in each house of the central legislature. The suggestion has been made that in case difficulties arise in devising an election system for constituencies of the nature suggested, representation on the scale proposed should be secured by nomination.

Our recommendation.

355. We have considered this suggestion, but feel unable to accept it. We do not think that there is any reason for representing officers and ex-soldiers in the legislatures as a separate interest through a separate electorate. We recommend elsewhere the retention of the military service qualification and this will enable those ex-members of the regular military forces of the Crown, who are not independently qualified, to secure a place on the general electoral roll. We are, moreover, recommending that the existing qualifications for the provincial councils should be the qualification for the Federal Assembly, and this again will ensure that ex-officers and soldiers are in a position to make their voice felt in the elections for central legislative body.

CHAPTER XIV.—SIZE OF THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES.

356. The Prime Minister, in his letter of instructions, stated that " His Majesty's Government hope that your Committee will be in a position in due course so to frame their proposals as to present a complete and detailed scheme for the composition of each of the provincial legislatures and of the federal legislature." He said further that the size and composition of the legislatures must largely depend upon our detailed proposals for the franchise and the constituencies, and he added that it was apparent " that until decisions have been taken upon certain questions of principle which still remain unsettled your Committee will not be in a position to draw up such a plan in its entirety."

The question dependent on a communal decision.

357. We have in the foregoing chapters submitted our proposals for the franchise, but it is clear that the question of both the size and composition of the legislatures cannot be exactly determined until a settlement of the communal question has been reached. We have felt, however, that it is important that we should in our present report give some general idea of what the size of the provincial legislatures should be in the light of our enquiries into the franchise, and in order to expedite as far as possible the work of our Committee, steps were taken at a very early stage to invite local Governments and provincial committees to formulate any provisional views on the question which they might feel able to record in the absence of a communal decision. Accordingly we now submit an analysis of the views which have been expressed on the subject, together with a statement of our advice, in so far as we can give it in advance of a settlement of the communal question.

Views of the Statutory Commission.

358. The Statutory Commission in their report expressed the opinion that, speaking generally, the present numbers of the provincial councils were too small, and that alike in the interests of securing a closer contact between the member and the elector, and in view of the anticipated increase both in the amount and in the importance of the work to be performed in future by provincial legislatures, a substantial enlargement of their size was desirable. The Commission, while they felt unable to make specific recommendations as regards individual provinces, expressed the opinion that " an immediate increase in the case of the more important provinces to a figure of between 200 and 300 might be sufficient for the present," and added, " we are satisfied that, having regard to the vast size of the areas to be represented and to other considerations which we have mentioned, at least some such expansion would, on merits, be desirable. It may well be, however, that a greater enlargement than

this will ultimately be found expedient unless the average size of the present provinces is reduced. But it is necessary to proceed with caution." (Report Volume II, page 55.)

Provisional views of local Governments and Committees.

359. After our discussions with them, practically all the provincial Governments and committees gave us their provisional views as to the size of the future provincial legislatures. The table which follows shows the existing legislatures together with the proposals submitted to us :—

Province.	Present House.	Elected members.	Proposed new House.	
			Govern-ment.	Com-mittee.
Madras	132	98	210	220
Bombay	114	86	180/220*	150/200*
Bengal	140	114	240/275*	225/250*
United Provinces	123	100	200	250
Punjab	94	71	150	200
Bihar and Orissa	103	76	147/157*	200
Central Provinces	73	55	100	110
Assam	53	39	—	100
North-West Frontier Province	40	28	40†	60

*The larger number is proposed if the legislature is unicameral, the smaller if it is bicameral.

†No recommendation as to the size of the house was made by the Government of the North-West Frontier Province. The size of the present house is 40.

Our proposals.

360. It will be seen that, in general, local Governments and provincial committees are in agreement in recommending an increase in the size of the provincial legislatures to between two and three times the present number of elected members. There is no very substantial difference between the totals recommended in various provinces by these two bodies. In some cases, the size of the house proposed will depend on the decision as to the establishment in a particular province of a second chamber—a matter which we discuss elsewhere in our report. In the case of the major provinces, the increase proposed corresponds generally to that tentatively suggested by the Statutory Commission, though the electorate which we have recommended will be substantially larger than that contemplated by the Commission. But in the light of the discussions which have taken place we recommend that the size of the new legislatures should be approximately that suggested by the local Governments and provincial committees, subject, of course, to modification in detail after the communal decision has been reached.

361. The increase involved is, as will be seen, substantial. But the case for such an increase is a strong one. In the first place, we are recommending an enlargement in the electorate to approximately five times its present size. We are satisfied that even with the present limited electorate, the existing constituencies are exceedingly difficult to manage, and that their size as well as, in some cases, their very large population makes it almost impossible for the elected representative to keep in touch with his electors or effectively to represent them. We think it essential to reduce the size of constituencies and make them more manageable in character if the system of responsible government is to work properly. This clearly can only be achieved if the number of seats in the provincial legislatures is substantially increased. We append a table showing the effect of our proposals for the franchise, the average area of the constituencies, and the average number of electors in each, taking a rough mean between the figures recommended by the provincial governments and committees for the size of the provincial legislatures :—

Province.	Approximate number of seats.	Average area of territorial constituencies in square miles.	Average number of electors per territorial constituency.
Madras	215	661	33,693
Bombay	200	618	18,630
Bengal	250	310	32,000
United Provinces ..	225	472	33,333
Punjab	175	566	16,000
Bihar and Orissa	175	474	20,000
Central Provinces ..	105	951	18,571
Assam	100	550	10,400
North West Frontier Province.	50	270	4,840

These seem to us manageable constituencies. We have made no allowance in these figures for the seats* specially reserved for women, labour, commerce, landholders and the universities because their number is not yet definitely settled. If these are taken into account the area and the number of voters will be slightly larger than is shown in the table.

362. A further argument in favour of a substantial increase in the numbers of the House is the fact that we recommend the retention of effective representation for special interests under the new constitution. The reasons which have led us to this decision are set forth in paragraphs 317–338. But we are clear that the representation of such interests should not be allowed to affect to any considerable extent the balance of power resulting from the elections in the ordinary constituencies, or, to quote the Prime Minister's declaration

* Women: para. 220; labour: para. 276; landholders, commerce and universities: para. 337.

to the Round Table Conference of 1st December, 1931, to " encroach, to an extent which amounts to stultification, upon the principles of representative responsible government ". The larger the size of the provincial legislature, the easier the task of making adequate provision for such interests without prejudicially affecting the claims of electors in the general constituencies.

363. This increase in size will swell the total number of members of the provincial councils from the present figure of 872, of whom 651 are elected, to between 1,500 and 1,750, according to whether there is a second chamber or not. To this number there must be added the members of the Federal Assembly and the Senate for British India (see paragraph 397), bringing the total to over 2,000. This is a large addition to the number of legislators and politicians which India will have to provide under the new constitution, especially when it is remembered that in every contested seat there will be two or more candidates. But legislatures of a size sufficient to make them representative are inherent in a system of responsible government. It will be for the people to produce leaders of the necessary qualifications and in the necessary numbers to make the system a success.

Expenditure.

364. In a separate Appendix (No. VI) we discuss the question of the expenditure which will be entailed upon Government and upon the candidates under the electorate and the electoral arrangements which we propose. It is impossible to form any precise estimate, but it will be seen that on the best information available the cost to local Governments of a general election is not likely to fall far short of £500,000 (Rs. 66 lakhs). The estimate of the expenditure of candidates is even more conjectural, but a crore of rupees (£750,000) is not likely to be excessive.

CHAPTER XV.—MULTI-MEMBER AND SINGLE MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES.

365. The history of democracy is filled with controversy over methods of representation. Adult franchise can secure equality in casting votes but whether these votes are effective in securing representation in the legislatures depends upon the system of representation employed. The original practice of democracy was to provide for majority rule on the basis of the votes of the whole population voting as a single constituency (the system in force for the election of the American and German Presidents), or in territorial constituencies containing as far as possible an equal number of voters. It was not long, however, before minorities, religious, political, racial, or economic, claimed that the system of majority rule was unduly crude in its operation, and was unfair to important sections of the community having opinions or interests of their own, which, under the single member constituency system, had no chance of securing direct representation in the legislature. The system of proportional representation was introduced, to protect, as the Prime Minister said in his concluding statement to the Round Table Conference on 1st December, 1931, " minorities from an unrestricted and tyrannical use of the democratic principle expressing itself solely through majority power". It has many forms, from that of the single transferable vote in constituencies returning three to five members (or alternatively of the single non-transferable vote) to the system of cumulative voting. Public opinion throughout the world has not, as yet, come to any clear conclusion on the matter, for both systems are in operation in different countries. But broadly it may be said that the single member system tends to provide stable party majorities in the legislatures, and to be more convenient for voter and candidate as the constituencies are smaller, while the proportional system gives a fairer representation of opinion but multiplies parties and magnifies the size of constituencies to three or five times the size of single member constituencies, according to the number of members to be elected.

366. The extreme form of the majority rule system is the nation wide constituency (as in the United States of America and Germany) or the single member territorial constituency (as in England). The extreme form of minority representation is the separate electorates in which the minorities are registered on separate rolls and vote in separate constituencies, returning their own members directly to the legislature.

367. It is impossible for us at this stage to express any opinion as to which system should be adopted in the new constitution, for the question lies at the core of the communal problem which is beyond our terms of reference. We would simply point out that if separate

electorates are adopted for any community, the constituencies so created must be single member constituencies, as otherwise they would be quite unmanageable in size. It is also clear that if any system of reservation of seats in joint electorates is adopted it necessarily implies multi-member constituencies, as it is impossible to reserve seats for members in single member constituencies.

368. The only place where the multi-member constituency has been pressed upon us, apart from the communal question, has been in Bombay, where the Mahrattas have seats reserved for them in general non-Muhammadan constituencies and press for their retention. This request is supported by the Provincial Government and Committee, and while the experience of Madras shows that the reservation of seats for non-Brahmans has been unnecessary in practice, the majority of us see no reason to depart from the recommendation of the local Government and the Provincial Committee that the present arrangement should continue.

The cumulative vote recommended in multi-member constituencies.

369. In multi-member constituencies we recommend the use of the cumulative vote. Under this system every voter will have the right to use as many votes as there are candidates. He may use these votes as he desires, " plumping " them all for one candidate or distributing them. This method can be adopted whether the "coloured box " system is used or not. Under the " coloured box " system in Bombay Municipality voting cards are perforated according to the number of candidates. Portions of the card may be detached and placed in the boxes of different candidates or the whole card may be placed in one box as a " plumped " vote. An alternative method in multi-member constituencies is to use the restrictive vote, a system under which, however many candidates there are, the voter has the right to use one vote only. We prefer however the wider opportunities given by the method of cumulative vote. The elector can exercise his discretion how he will distribute his votes and is given the opportunity of exercising a broader choice and not reserving his attentions solely to those of his caste or creed, if he so desires. It therefore gives a less narrow outlook to the voter and renders the divisions in the community less stereotyped. It gives him no less opportunity than the restrictive method to concentrate his votes upon the candidate of his choice. It is not so simple as the other method though the results may be said more exactly to represent the wishes of the electorate.

370. There is one subsidiary point to be considered. Where single member constituencies are in operation and more than two candidates contest the seat, the successful candidate may be returned by a minority of the votes cast, thereby defeating the majority principle and making it possible for the legislature to consist largely of members returned by a minority of the votes cast (as was the case with the British Parliament of 1924). Accordingly two methods of ensuring

that the candidate returned shall represent the majority of the constituency are in use in several countries. The first is the system of the second ballot, under which, where no candidate obtains an absolute majority, a second election is held a week later, and the candidates with the smallest number of votes have to withdraw from the second election. The second is the system of the alternative vote, where the voters indicate their choice in order of preference.

The second ballot.

371. As regards the second ballot, we are unanimously agreed that the delay and expense involved in the application of this device would be too great to enable us to support its introduction. As it is, in some provinces, elections are going to be spread over several days. A repetition of the dislocation of administration involved would be intolerable. Any benefits obtained by the use of the second ballot would be counterbalanced by the ills bred of uncertainty and delay.

The alternative vote.

372. As regards the alternative vote, the object is to prevent a minority from gaining control of the legislature. While modifying the extent of this danger and preventing the election of the worst candidate, it militates against the election of the best. On the technical side it is open to the objection that the second choices of those who support the leading candidate on the first count are not considered. The general effect is to neutralise any ascendancy of a party or candidate and so bring about uncertainty and short-lived administrations. New South Wales has reverted to the majority system after a trial of the alternative vote. Elsewhere in Australia it is reported that it has worked with comparative smoothness, though the Royal Commission on Electoral Systems in 1910 remarks, " We are bound to draw attention to the fact that in Australia the opportunity for party intrigue and the gratification of personal ill-feeling, which are conferred both by the power of using and that of withholding preferences, have been found to produce regrettable results."

373. Apart from these general considerations, we are unanimously of opinion that for the electorate we have proposed the alternative vote is out of the question, because of the complication which it would introduce at a time when we have proposed an extension of the electorate up to the limits of administrative manageability.

374. The system of the alternative vote may be summarised as follows :—

(1) A voter may indicate his first choice by placing the figure 1 or an X on his ballot paper opposite the name of that candidate ; a paper so marked is counted as a first preference to that candidate.

(2) A voter may place the figure 2 against the candidate whom he would prefer if his first choice is not elected.

(3) The candidate who receives an absolute majority of first preference votes is elected.

(4) If there is no absolute majority, the candidate who has received the smallest number of first preference votes is excluded, and each of his ballot papers which indicates a second preference shall be counted as a vote given to the candidate named as a second preference; if in that count any candidate receives an absolute majority he is duly elected.

(5) If still no candidate has an absolute majority the candidate with the next lowest number of votes is excluded, and the process is repeated of transferring his ballot papers which included a second preference to the candidate named as a second preference, and the procedure is followed by means of succeeding counts until one candidate receives an absolute majority of the votes given at that count.

(6) If two or more candidates, one of whom ought to be excluded, have an equal number of votes, that candidate is excluded, the greater number of whose votes are transferred votes, and if there is no difference in this respect between the candidates the returning officer shall decide which candidate shall be returned.

375. It will be seen at once that the system here described implies the marking of ballot papers. We have already recommended in Appendix V the system of the coloured box or " symbol " as being best suited to the new electorate, for the reasons that we have given. It might be possible to adjust the principle of the alternative vote to this system by the use of perforated cards, such as are used in elections in the Bombay municipality. But they are there used as a method of cumulative voting, as previously described. Were this system to be used preferentially it would appear to be necessary to print the perforated cards in different colours allocating a different value, first, second, or third, to each colour. To an illiterate villager, or indeed to anyone, the system would be extremely confusing, and the impossibility of reconciling the system of preferential voting with that of the coloured box or " symbol " system is apparent. It is not in our opinion worth abandoning the ordinary method of voting in order to introduce the alternative vote.

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CHAPTER XVI.—SECOND CHAMBERS IN PROVINCES.

376. From the outset of the discussion about the Indian constitution there has been a difference of opinion as to the advisability of having second chambers in the provincial legislatures. Under the system of dyarchy the question did not arise because the legislatures were responsible only over a very limited sphere. But as soon as it was decided that responsible government should be established in the provinces the question entered into the field of debate. The Statutory Commission was divided on the subject. Some of the members recommended the establishment of second chambers because they " read constitutional history as showing that the consideration of legislation by one house is inadequate, and that a second chamber has been proved to be the best revisory instrument." Others opposed their establishment " believing that the principal objections to second chambers which we have quoted from the Montagu-Chelmsford Report—the complexity which they will involve, the deficiency of material, and the undue protection of vested interests from legislative interference—make their creation undesirable."

377. Opinion among the provincial Governments and the provincial committees which sat with the Statutory Commission was equally divided. Four provincial Governments were opposed to the establishment of second chambers because the material from which they could be formed did not exist in the provinces. Three provincial Governments were in favour of their establishment. Of the committees, a majority in four provinces were in favour, and four provinces were on the whole against. The Indian Central Committee was similarly divided.

The Round Table Conference.

378. The Provincial Constitution sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference recognised " that conditions in some provinces may make it desirable that the provincial legislatures should be bicameral," and by a majority stated that " the decision to incorporate a second chamber in the new constitution of any province other than Bengal, the United Provinces, and Bihar and Orissa, where opinion in favour of a second chamber has already been expressed, should not be taken until opinion in the province definitely favours this course."

Our enquiries in the provinces.

379. In our terms of reference we are instructed " to present a complete and detailed scheme for the composition of each of the provincial legislatures," and it is clear, therefore, that it is necessary for us to consider at some stage the question of a second chamber. In our original questionnaire no reference was made to the problem

of the second chamber, but we found that the views of some witnesses as to the franchise for the councils would depend in some measure upon whether there was a second chamber or not. In order, therefore, to avoid delay, we asked provincial Governments and committees to give us a preliminary expression of their views on the subject. In discussing the question with them it was suggested that if there was to be a second chamber in the provinces it should be small in size, say, one-fourth of the lower house, that it should not compete for power with the lower house, and that its powers should be limited to revision and delay for a period of, say, a year, after which a conflict of opinion should be resolved by a joint session, save in the case of the budget where, in the event of disagreement, the views of the lower house should prevail.

The question of size.

380. As regards size, the prevailing opinion is that it should be between a quarter and a third of the size of the lower house. There is a very wide divergence of opinion as to how it should be composed. The most common view is that in the main it should be elected by relatively small electorates qualified by a high franchise, supplemented in the view of some by a small number of nominated members, and in the view of others by a proportion, say, a third, elected by the lower house. There is also a certain amount of opinion in favour of creating a special electorate of persons holding, or who have held, political, judicial, or administrative office, who have been chairmen or members of district and local boards and municipalities, who have been honorary magistrates, who have been members of the Senate or graduates of universities, and so forth.

Views of local Governments and provincial committees.

381. The views of the provincial Governments and committees on the subject of a second chamber in the light of this discussion are as follows. Both the provincial Governments and committees of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa, and Assam are in favour of a second chamber. The Government of the Punjab and the Central Provinces are on the whole against a second chamber, and the provincial committees have expressed no opinion.

382. The question must be decided one way or the other when the new constitution comes to be drafted, and we consider that it may be well to state as clearly as possible the arguments as they have emerged on the one side and the other in the course of our enquiries.

Arguments in favour of a second chamber.

383. The advocates of the second chamber base their case on four main grounds.

It is important at a time when the suffrage is being very largely extended in a country where the vast majority of the electors will be illiterate to create a body which will be representative of experience and expert knowledge to act as a stabilising factor by being empowered, not to compete for power with the lower house, but to revise or delay legislation for a short period.

The great majority of the democracies of the world, even those which have come recently into being, have been established on a bicameral basis. Experience in the Australian and American Federations seems to show that their existence has been a security against abuse of power and impetuosity on the part of the popular chamber.

A second chamber makes it possible for people of political and administrative experience and ability who, for reasons of age, or finance, or health, are unable to enter the lower house through the arduous process of popular electioneering, to be brought into public life and made available for public office.

It is better that the responsibility for acting as a brake on the lower house should normally be exercised by a second chamber than by the Governor—which is the alternative.

Arguments against a second chamber.

384. The contentions of the opponents of the second chamber, on the other hand, are as follows :—

Analogies drawn from sovereign nations to make out a case for second chambers of provincial legislatures in India are superficial, fallacious and misleading. The history of the subject in India tells more heavily against the proposal than in favour of it.

While provincial governments and committees are by a majority in favour of the proposal, the weight of public opinion is against the second chamber, and such opinion as there is in favour, is mostly of those who are concerned more for the special position of the privileged classes than for the advancement of the people at large. Far, therefore, from conducing to stability, second chambers in the provinces will, by impeding measures designed to benefit the mass of the people who have been the most neglected, and whose welfare must be the primary concern of the future legislatures, tend to aggravate discontent and hasten the very mischief which all desire to see avoided.

The establishment of second chambers in the provincial legislatures would be expensive ; it will be difficult in many provinces to man those chambers ; and all interests will be sufficiently represented in the lower House.

The hopes of people that the coming constitutional reform will be a measure of political appeasement and will facilitate progress will be destroyed, if the partial concessions made with the right hand are in effect to be taken away with the left, by the establishment of institutions for the benefit of the favoured few and the whittling down of powers ostensibly given to popular legislatures.

Our conclusions.

385. The examination of the problem of the franchise has occupied so much of our time during the three months that have elapsed since we began our work that we have not had time to go into the details connected with the formation of a second chamber. Moreover the question whether the provincial legislatures of the future should be bicameral is really a constitutional issue which is beyond the scope of the terms of reference to our Committee. Until these issues are settled, it would be useless to frame detailed schemes for the franchise or composition of the second chambers, if any, which are to be set up in the different provinces. We refrain therefore from making any proposals on the subject, though we have summarised above the various opinions which we have collected.

CHAPTER XVII.—MINOR LOCAL ADMINISTRATIONS: DELHI, COORG, AND AJMER-MERWARA.

386. Steps were taken on our arrival in India to give publicity to our questionnaire in the minor local administrations of Delhi, Coorg, and Ajmer-Merwara and to give an opportunity for the Chief Commissioner and representative individuals and local bodies in those provinces to express their views on the points raised in it. Owing to pressure of time we were unable to visit either Coorg or Ajmer-Merwara. In the case of Delhi, evidence was taken from the Municipal Committee and statements were received from a number of representative local bodies. A brief note of the principal questions brought to our notice in the three Administrations now under our consideration follows. But we have not found it possible, in the very short period at our disposal, to investigate the question of the franchise as affecting those areas in any detail or to ascertain how far the proposals submitted to us as detailed below give effect to the general instructions of the Prime Minister as defined in paragraph 3 of his letter of 29th December. We are not therefore in a position to make final recommendations on the subject at this stage.

Delhi.

387. The province of Delhi has an area of 593 square miles and a population of 636,246. It has no separate legislative council, but is represented in the Legislative Assembly by means of one elected seat. The province of Delhi is not represented as such in the Council of State, but in practice the Chief Commissioner is a nominated member of that Chamber. For the Assembly the constituency is the whole province.

388. The electoral qualifications are those required in general constituencies in the Punjab, with the addition that a tenant of immovable property other than land assessed to land revenue is enfranchised on the same terms as an owner of such property. The number of electors on the roll at the last election was 7,156 and of this number 22·9 per cent. went to the poll.

389. The representations received by us from the Delhi Municipal Committee were to a large extent concerned with the question of establishing Delhi as a Governor's province or alternatively of creating a local legislature for the Delhi province. This is a question which falls outside our terms of reference and with which we are not concerned. On the general question of the franchise, we have already indicated that we are not in a position to make a final recommendation, though we are disposed at the present stage to think that the franchise system of the neighbouring provinces will probably be found suitable.

Coorg.

390. The province of Coorg covers an area of 1,582 square miles, with a population (1931) of 163,327. Since 1924 it has had a legislative council consisting of 15 elected and five nominated members. Of the five nominated members four are officials and one is a non-official representing the depressed classes. The franchise qualifications are based, as in the major provinces, on the tenure of land, on the system of income tax, on military service and on payment of certain municipal taxes. The constituencies are territorial and residence in them is a necessary qualification of an elector. The percentage of the total population at present enfranchised is 6·5, the voters on the roll numbering 10,563. The male population over the age of 25 is 43,240 and the number of literates over the age of 20, 13,360. The percentage of registered electors who went to the poll in 1927 was 75. The elections were freely contested.

391. The Coorg Administration, on the receipt of our questionnaire, established a provincial franchise committee of their own. We have received an interesting report from this committee. Its proposals, which have the support of the Chief Commissioner, would result, if they were accepted, in an increase of the electorate to about 16 per cent. This would be achieved by the reduction of the existing basis of qualification by 50 per cent. in respect of both land tenure and the taxes paid under the Coorg District Fund and Municipal Regulations, by the introduction of a qualification based on education independently of property (in the case of men the possession of a completed secondary school leaving certificate and in the case of women a lower educational qualification, say the lower secondary standard) and by the retention of the existing military service qualification and its extension to include service in the auxiliary and territorial forces. Special proposals are made for the representation of the depressed classes and of Europeans. In the opinion of the Committee separate representation is not necessary either for planting interests or for labour.

392. We have noted the suggestions put forward above. But we regret that, as already explained, it has been impossible for us, in the brief time at our disposal, to consider them in any detail at this stage. We are unable, in these circumstances, to submit any recommendation in respect of the franchise for Coorg.

Ajmer-Merwara.

393. The province of Ajmer-Merwara has an area of 2,711 square miles and a population of 560,292. Like Delhi it is represented by one elected member in the Legislative Assembly. It is not represented in the Council of State. The constituency for the Assembly is the whole province. The electoral qualifications are based on residence,

the ownership of immoveable property or of land assessed to not less than Rs. 150 per annum, on payment of rent of not less than Rs. 200 per annum in certain circumstances and not less than Rs. 300 per annum when land is held in some other right, and on assessment to income-tax. The electoral roll contained 4,339 electors on the date of the last election, 35·9 per cent. of whom recorded a vote.

394. We have received a memorandum from the Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana in reply to our questionnaire. He expresses the opinion that the reasons which have been advanced to justify a large extension of the franchise have little weight in the special circumstances of Ajmer-Merwara. But he makes certain recommendations for widening the electorate, the effect of the acceptance of which would be to increase the electorate from 4,339 to approximately 20,187. As in the case of Delhi and Coorg, it has been impossible for us, in the time at our disposal, to consider the special problems of franchise in relation to Ajmer-Merwara and, while we have taken note of the suggestions of the proposals of the Agent to the Governor-General, we are not in a position to make any recommendations on them.

General.

395. All these questions should be examined at a later stage during the delimitation of the constituencies, after they have been further considered by the local administrations in the light of our report.

PART III.

THE FEDERATION.

CHAPTER XVIII.—INTRODUCTION.

396. The problem which confronts us when we turn to the federal legislature is unexampled in history. In the first place, the legislature itself will be charged with the affairs of 338 million people within the federal sphere determined in the constitution—a number three times as great as has ever before been brought within a single democratically governed state (see note on page 18). In the second place, a large proportion of the seats—according to Scheme of the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference 40 per cent. of the Senate and 33 per cent. of the Legislative Assembly—will come from the Indian States where the principle of responsible government, as it will be applied in the provinces, is not in operation. It is clearly not possible to transplant exactly the methods appropriate to the provinces, which correspond in size to the various States of Europe, to so vast and complex an organism. Moreover, we recognise that in framing our proposals we are thinking of British India alone, and that before final decisions are taken regarding the federal legislature, further discussion between the representatives of the Indian States and of British India as well as of the British Government, will have to take place.

397. The scheme provisionally adopted by the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference provides for a Senate of 200 and a Legislative Assembly of 300, of which numbers 120 and 200, respectively, will come from British India. The tentative allocation of these seats between the provinces was as follows:—

Names of provinces.	Upper Chamber.	Lower Chamber.
Madras	17	32
Bombay	17	26
Bengal	17	32
United Provinces	17	32
Punjab	17	26
Bihar and Orissa	17	26
Central Provinces (if Berar is included)	7	12
Assam	5	7
N.W.F.P.	2	3
Delhi	1	1
Ajmer-Merwara..	1	1
Coorg	1	1
British Baluchistan	1	1
	120	200

398. We have received representations from several provinces stating that the proportion of seats allotted to them by the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference scheme both in the Senate and the Assembly is insufficient, and asking for a larger quota. We have considered this matter carefully, and have come to the conclusion that no case has been made out for modifying the allocation proposed, and that it could not be altered for one province without doing injustice to other provinces.

CHAPTER XIX.—THE SENATE.

Method of election.

399. The scheme of the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference provides that the members of the Senate should be elected by the provincial legislatures by the system of the single transferable vote, so as to secure proportionate representation in the Senate of the main parties and communities in the provincial legislatures, and that the members of the Assembly should be elected directly by the electors. We understand that the main reason which influenced the Round Table Conference in coming to this conclusion was that, in accordance with the usual federal precedent, the upper house should represent the units of the Federation and the lower house the nation as a whole. A certain number of witnesses and one or two provincial Governments and committees have suggested variations of this scheme, for instance, that the upper house should be elected directly and the lower house by the provincial legislatures, or that both should be directly elected, or both indirectly elected, by the provincial legislatures. We consider that the proposal of the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference is sound in principle and would accept it. The quota of council members which will be necessary to elect a senator will only appear when a decision has been taken on the exact size of the provincial legislatures and on the question whether they are to be bicameral. The question of the representation of those sections of the provincial legislature which will not be able to secure this quota will require consideration later.

Size of Senate and restrictions on candidature.

400. So far, therefore, as the Senate is concerned there is little for us to say. We recommend no increase in the numbers of the Senate, both because an upper house should be a smaller and more compact body than the lower and because the present quota allotted to the provinces is as large as can conveniently be elected by the legislatures, if their own members are not to be liable to undue depletion. Two further questions arise. The first is, should there be any limitation on the persons who can be elected to the Senate; for instance, should members of the provincial legislatures themselves be ineligible? In our view, the legislatures should be left free to choose from among their own members or from outside whoever they may think will make the best representatives of the province in the Senate. The second concerns the method by which seats in the provincial legislatures should be filled in the event of seats in the council being vacated through the election of members to the Senate; for simultaneous tenure of a seat in the provincial and the federal legislature should be barred in the constitution. The

alternatives are co-option by the legislature or bye-elections. The arguments for co-option are that it is simple, that it enables the parties to bring into the provincial legislatures persons of distinction who may have been unable to stand for popular election and whose services there may be of the utmost value. The arguments against it are that the members so elected will not represent the constituencies, and that co-option may affect the party or communal balance in the legislatures. The arguments for the bye-election are that it is more democratic, that it maintains the party balance in the council, and that the council will be less likely to elect Senators from among its own members if the result of doing so is a number of bye-elections. The arguments against it are that it is inconvenient and expensive. On the whole, we are in favour of the method of bye-election.

401. One other point remains: should the Senate be elected as a whole immediately after every general election, so as to reflect the political complexion of the provincial legislatures, or should one-third or one-half be elected, say, every three years, so that the Senate may have continuity and represent the steady opinion of the people rather than the more excited atmosphere created by elections? The latter system has the advantage that it lessens the number of provincial council members who may be removed to another place at any one time. The former system would ensure that the Senate represented provincial opinion more accurately at the time of its election, and would tend to secure in the Senate a more accurate representation of the minorities in the provincial council. In coming to a final decision on these matters, the communal issue may also have to be taken into account, and therefore, at this stage, we content ourselves with stating the alternatives.

CHAPTER XX.—THE ASSEMBLY.

Method of election to the Assembly.

402. We come now to the Federal Assembly, where we find ourselves confronted by a preliminary question of great importance. The population of India to-day is 338 millions, and that of British India 257 millions, and it is rapidly increasing. The area of India is 1,575,000 square miles, and that of British India 862,668 square miles. There is a strict limit to the size of any legislature which is to be an efficient instrument for debate, legislation, and the making and unmaking of governments. It seems to be the general experience that legislatures of over 500, or at most 600 members, become unwieldy and unmanageable. If, therefore, India is at some stage to introduce adult franchise for the federal legislature, it will mean that each British Indian constituency on the average will cover an area of over 1,700 square miles and will contain almost 500,000 people, or about 250,000 electors. Is it possible that a responsible system can function successfully on such a basis, especially if there is still a large illiterate vote? It was this consideration among others which led the writers of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report and the Indian Statutory Commission to recommend that the federal legislature should be constituted by wholly indirect election. This proposal was rejected by the Joint Committee of Parliament in 1920 in favour of direct election, and from the evidence we have received, it is clear that public opinion in India is still overwhelmingly in favour of direct election to the Assembly in some form.

403. It has, however, been suggested by the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference, and the suggestion has since been repeated to us in India, that the Federal Assembly should be so constituted as to represent not the provincial legislators, but the electors themselves voting indirectly by the group system. The suggestion has been pressed on the ground that it is the only way of reducing the number of persons who will elect the members of the Federal Assembly to manageable proportions while giving to the primary elector a voice in the choice of his federal representative. We consider, however, that the arguments against the indirect system of voting (either through groups or through district boards, etc.) which are set forth in Chapter III, are just as valid in the case of the Federal Assembly as they are in the case of the provincial councils. If the system were based on adult franchise, it would be administratively impracticable. If the provincial council electors were formed into groups of, say, 10, to elect a secondary elector, so that the secondary voters were reduced to about 3,600,000, the

administrative difficulties would still be formidable, the system would involve a double election with all its expense and trouble for candidates and voters—for the primary election would certainly be fought as a political contest; the primary voter would have no certainty as to how the secondary elector voted; the chances of manipulation and corruption would be increased; and the other objections to the system pointed out in the earlier part of this Report would apply. Moreover, while size and numbers present formidable difficulties, there are considerations to be put on the other side. The first is that the problem of dealing with such astronomic numbers will not arise for a considerable time. We are not proposing adult franchise for the provinces, and it seems unlikely that it will be introduced in the near future for the federation either. The second is that the problem will become more manageable in proportion as the whole population becomes educated, as broadcasting becomes universal and as transport facilities and arrangements for public meetings improve. The third is that the experience of the United States of America, which are to-day infinitely better equipped both in education and in radio and transport facilities than India, and where political parties are exceptionally highly organised, proves that there is nothing inherently impossible about the eventual election of members of the Federal Assembly by the whole adult population of British India. The area of the United States is 3,026,789 square miles of which one-third consists of thinly populated mountain territory. The population is 122,775,046. The number of members of the House of Representatives is 435, or one for every 6,958 square miles and 282,241 of the population. The number of the Senate is 96. Two members are elected by each state, voting as a single constituency, of which the largest is New York, with an area of 49,204 square miles, and a population of 12,588,066, and the smallest is Rhode Island, with an area of 1,248 square miles and a population of 687,497. (Nevada has an area of 109,821 square miles and a population of 91,058.)

404. We have come to the conclusion, therefore, that in the case of the federal, no less than of the provincial legislatures, we must proceed on the basis of the direct vote of the individual elector, leaving time and progress to overcome the obstacles which exist to-day to anything like adult suffrage for the Federal Assembly. Before, however, considering the extent to which the present electorate of 1,140,000 should be increased, there are two preliminary matters to be discussed—the size of the Assembly and the distribution of seats between the provinces.

Size of the Assembly and distribution of seats between provinces.

405. While we approve of the number of seats allotted to the Senate, we are of opinion that the number of seats allotted to British India in the Assembly, namely, 200, is too small, from the point of view of the proper working of the electoral system itself.

The following table gives the average area of each constituency, dividing the total area of each province by the number of seats allotted to it :—

Province.	*No. of seats.*	*Area per member in square miles.*
Madras	32	4,446
Bombay	26	4,753
Bengal	32	2,422
United Provinces	32	3,320
Punjab	26	3,815
Bihar and Orissa	26	3,194
Central Provinces	12	8,326
Assam	7	7,859
North-West Frontier Province	3	4,506

Our proposals.

In practice the area will be larger, partly because a certain number of seats will consist of compact urban areas and partly because, if separate electorates are adopted, the average Muhammadan seat will be about 12,500 square miles and the average non-Muhammadan seat 6,500 square miles in area. These areas are far too large for convenient working, or to enable the member to maintain reasonable contact with the electorate in the present condition of communications in India. The same argument applies to numbers. The fewer the constituencies, the larger the number of electors with which every candidate will have to deal. This will become plainer when we come to consider the actual electorate we propose. In the meanwhile we would only say that we consider that the number of seats in the Federal Assembly should be increased so as to allot to British India 300 seats, instead of 200, thus reducing the average area of the constituency by one-third. We recognise the arguments which have been advanced in favour of keeping the federal legislature a small and compact body, especially in view of the fact that its activities will be restricted to the federal sphere. But if responsible government is to develop properly, the electoral system must make it possible for the candidate and member to get and keep in touch with his constituents, and we think that from this point of view an increase in the British Indian seats to 300 is necessary. The distribution of these seats between the provinces should be in the same proportion as that recommended by the Federal Structure Committee.

Franchise for the Assembly.

406. We now come to the franchise for the Assembly. The Governments and franchise committees of Bombay, Bengal, and Bihar and Orissa, and the Governments of the Punjab and Assam, are in favour of retaining for the new Assembly the franchise qualification for the existing Assembly. The Madras Government and Committee would double the present electors and the Assam Committee would treble it. The Government and Committee of the Central Provinces and the Committees of the United Provinces and the Punjab propose the franchise for the present legislative councils as the future Assembly franchise. The United Provinces Government proposes the members of the present local boards.

Objections to adopting the franchise proposed for provincial councils.

407. The federal legislature is to be the body through which the national spirit and aspirations will express themselves and accomplish their ends. Difficult as is the problem of finding a suitable basis of franchise for the Assembly owing to the size of British India and the numbers of its population, we think that the electorate must be considerably larger than that contemplated at present by most of the provincial Governments and Committees. The present electorate consists of 1,140,000 persons, all of them enfranchised under a high property qualification. This electorate is obviously much too small. It has therefore been suggested that the franchise for the Assembly should be the same as for the provincial councils. At first sight this proposal has a great deal to recommend it. It is simple, for it involves the preparation of only one roll. And it provides for as fair a distribution of voting power between the various sections of the community as is practical by the direct vote to-day, for reasons we have explained in the chapters dealing with the provincial franchise. But on closer consideration, we have been driven to reject it for three reasons. The first is that the electorate for the Assembly will be required to deal with problems much more remote from the experience and knowledge of the village voter than the problems which will come before the provincial legislature. It seems unwise suddenly to extend an electorate of a little over a million electors to a total of nearly 36 millions, the vast majority of whom will be illiterate, and all but 7 millions of whom will never have cast a vote even for the provincial councils. The second is that we have extended the provincial electorate as far as we consider administratively practicable. The present practice is to hold the provincial and the assembly elections on the same day. If each elector had to cast two votes for different candidates and in different compartments it might cause an administrative breakdown. The third reason, however, is even more conclusive. The following table shows what the number of electors per member

and the area per constituency in each province would be on the two alternatives that the British Indian members of the Assembly number 200 and 300, respectively :—

Province.	200 members.		300 members.	
	Area.	Electors.	Area.	Electors.
Madras	4,446	226,375	2,964	150,916
Bombay	4,753	143,307	3,168	95,538
Bengal	2,422	250,000	1,614	166,667
United Provinces ..	3,320	234,375	2,213	156,250
Punjab	3,815	107,692	2,543	71,794
Bihar and Orissa ..	3,194	134,615	2,129	89,743
Central Provinces ..	8,326	162,500	5,550	108,333
Assam	7,859	148,571	5,239	99,047

408. This number of electors per member in such large areas would be quite unmanageable under present conditions, when the majority of the electors on the provincial rolls will be illiterate, when newspapers and communications are only partially developed so far as the villages are concerned, and when party organisation, which alone can make the political education of such numbers possible, is in its infancy. Even these figures, however, do not show the full extent of the difficulty. If separate electorates are maintained for Muslims and in the Punjab for Sikhs, the number of voters per member would not be increased, but the area over which they would be distributed and which candidates would have to cover would be enlarged, as shown above, to between 6,500 and 12,500 square miles with an Assembly containing 200 or between 4,300 and 8,300 square miles with an Assembly containing 300 members for British India. If we take into account the fact that some of the seats will be specially allotted to women, to labour and to special interests and that some will be in compact urban areas, then, with a legislature of 300, rural seats would cover on the average between 5,000 and 10,000 square miles and contain between 100,000 and 150,000 electors. After the fullest consideration we are convinced that such constituencies are too large for practical working at the present day. It would, we think, be utterly impossible for any real touch to be maintained between the Assembly member and his constituents. Indeed, it would be setting an impossible task both to the candidate and to the elector, and would be founding the new Federal Assembly on an irresponsible basis.

Our proposals.

409. We have therefore decided to recommend as the only practical course that the franchise for the Federal Assembly should be the same as that now in force for the provincial councils, supplemented by an educational qualification both for men and women. A fairly high property qualification will ensure that the voter has had some experience of affairs, while in those who do not possess the property

qualification, it is not unreasonable to require a moderate standard of education. The electors for the present provincial councils number 7,108,472 and while a large proportion of them are illiterate, most of them have had an opportunity of voting in four provincial elections, and therefore may be said to have had some political experience. We consider it important that as many of the Assembly electors as possible should be able to read intelligently books and newspapers dealing with the vital but difficult issues which will come before the federal legislature. We therefore suggest that in the case of men the educational qualification should be the possession of the matriculation or school leaving certificate or the equivalent in the case of *madrassas*, *dharamsalas* and other vernacular schools (see para. 83) and, because education has made much less progress among women, that in the case of women it should, for the present, be the attainment of the upper primary standard. In recent years the number of men obtaining the matriculation or school leaving certificate has been about 50,000 per annum and the number of women passing the upper primary standard has been about 12,000 per annum. Owing to overlapping with the property qualification and to the fact that these certificates are obtained some years before the age of 21 it is difficult to estimate how many additional voters the educational qualification will place upon the roll. It will, however, be a steadily expanding number and if, as we think desirable, the local Governments afford opportunities to adults to establish that they have reached these comparatively low standards, a rapidly expanding number. Even so, however, it is clear that the number of women on the electoral roll for the Federal Assembly will be very small. It may not exceed 400,000, or at most 500,000, as against about 6,800,000 men voters, which is not much above the proportion of one to twenty which the Prime Minister in his letter of instructions stated to be inadequate. We therefore consider that when the Assembly roll is being prepared, the names of all women who are entered on the new provincial council rolls under the literacy qualification should be added to it. This provision, however, should apply only to the first roll of election to the Assembly. Thereafter, while the names of all women who have been entered on the roll by reason of literacy should be retained, the qualification for the addition of new women electors should be the upper primary standard. It is difficult to estimate what the number of women thus added to the Assembly roll will be. The figures for women literates over 20 as given in the census for the various provinces will be found in paragraph 215 in the chapter on women's franchise. They number 1,255,000. The census authorities, however, make no investigation of literacy but accept the statement of the individual concerned as to whether he or she can write a letter to a friend and read the reply. The women who will qualify for the vote under the literacy qualification as proposed by us in paragraph 84 will certainly be considerably less than this figure, for, to a large extent, entry on the roll will depend upon the women taking the steps necessary to establish the fact that they are literate. Our proposal may however bring the number of women electors for

the Assembly up to 1,000,000, and if all those recorded in the census as literate place their names on the roll, the total will be about 1,500,000, as compared with a male electorate of about 6,800,000.

410. This proposal has the advantage that all women electors for the Assembly will be qualified in their own right, on the ground of property or education. It is open to the objection that it departs from the principle we have laid down that the educational qualification for the Assembly voter should be a fairly high one, and admits to the roll a large number of merely literate women. But, as already pointed out, a considerable proportion of the men electors will be illiterate, and we consider this temporary departure from the educational standard we propose as the permanent basis for the roll, to be a smaller evil than the enfranchisement of less than 500,000 women for an Assembly which will deal with many matters of vital concern to them.

411. In the Central Provinces, the existing council electorate is unduly low, consisting of little more than one per cent. of the population. We think that in this province the Federal Assembly electorate should be double the present council electorate, and the local Government should revise the franchise qualifications so as to ensure this result.

Distribution of voting power under our proposals.

412. We recognise that one serious objection to these proposals is that they will enfranchise only 3·3 per cent. of the population, and that, taken by themselves, they do not provide for that distribution of voting power among all sections of the community which according to the instructions of the Prime Minister we should endeavour to secure. For the reasons we have already given, it is impracticable to-day to obtain this result by the extension of the franchise to all the classes to whom we have extended the vote in the provinces. We are, however, increasing the electorate for the Assembly from 1,140,000 to *8,500,000, which will enfranchise approximately 12 per cent. of the adult males, as compared with one per cent. to-day, and a large proportion of the educated class. We propose further to remedy the defect in the distribution of voting power by providing for the direct representation of women and labour in the Assembly as described in the next chapter. (The representation of the depressed classes in the Assembly is outside the scope of our reference.) Though this is not the same thing as full enfranchisement, it is the only system which is practical under present day conditions. Moreover, most of the matters dealt with by the Federal Assembly will affect the mass of the population less directly than do the matters under the control of the provincial legislatures and will be much harder for them to understand. It has further to be borne in mind that the Senate will be a microcosm of the provincial legislatures, and that in so far as the latter represent the electorate of 36 millions which we are recommending for them, the Senate will also be representative of classes of

* Excluding the additional depressed class electors proposed in para 420.

the population which will not be directly enfranchised for the Assembly. Finally, under the proposals of the Round Table Conference, the federal legislature will not at first be responsible over the whole federal sphere. The Federal Assembly will contain representatives of the Indian States as well as of British India and we suggest that provision should be made in the constitution for a reconsideration of the franchise for British India after a definite period.

413. The extension of the franchise for the Assembly to an electorate seven times as large as the present Assembly electorate, through the addition of the educational qualification and the provision of special seats for women and labour is the best compromise with the facts of area and numbers we can suggest at the present time. In addition, as the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference also advised, we consider it essential that commerce and industry, both Indian and European, should be directly represented in the Assembly, though not in numbers which are likely to affect the general balance of political power. On these conditions, we consider that the federal legislature, Senate and Assembly, will be as representative of the general mass of the community in British India as is practicable to-day, and that no important section of the community will lack the means of expressing its needs and its opinions.

Effect of our proposals.

414. Our proposals will create an electorate of between eight and nine millions. The following table shows the average area of the constituencies and the number of voters for a house of 200 and 300 respectively :—

Province.	200 members.		300 members.	
	Area.	Electors.	Area.	Electors.
Madras	4,446	56,718	2,964	37,812
Bombay	4,753	40,453	3,168	26,968
Bengal	2,422	53,400	1,614	35,600
United Provinces ..	3,320	55,446	2,213	36,964
Punjab	3,815	31,923	2,543	21,282
Bihar and Orissa ..	3,194	19,050	2,129	12,700
Central Provinces ..	8,326	19,958	5,550	13,305
Assam	7,859	46,976	5,239	31,317

If our recommendation in paragraph 411 above is accepted these figures for voters will become, for the Central Provinces, 36,583 and 24,388 respectively.

415. If separate electorates are maintained for Muslims and Sikhs, and if account is taken of the town constituencies, the seats allotted to women, labour, and special interests, the constituencies under our proposals, while varying greatly in size, will, in the country districts, average between 5,000 and 10,000 square miles in area and will contain between 25,000 and 35,000 electors. This will impose a heavy task upon the candidate and the party organisation, and we are satisfied that it is the course of wisdom and practical statesmanship to go no further at present.

416. The following table gives a general view of the effect of our recommendations:—

Federal Assembly.

Province.	Present Electorate.			Proposed Electorate.			Percentage of proposed electorate to total population.	Percentage of proposed electorate to adult population.			Remarks.
	Men.	Women.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Total.		Men.	Women.	Total.	
Madras ..	256,391	19,491	275,882	1,342,031	472,969	1,815,000	3·8	11·2	3·8	7·4	
Bombay ..	170,958	5,644	176,602	841,099	210,702	1,051,801	4·8	14·2	4·0	9·4	
Bengal.. ..	234,975	16,360	251,335	1,289,994	418,809	1,708,803	3·4	9·5	3·5	6·7	
United Provinces	198,740	7,424	206,164	1,590,066	184,224	1,774,290	3·6	12·0	1·5	7·0	
Punjab ..	82,884	3,413	86,297	719,801	110,199	830,000	3·5	11·0	2·1	7·1	
Bihar and Orissa	73,777	1,676	75,453	411,400	83,924	495,324	1·3	4·3	0·8	2·5	
Central Provinces.	33,091	931	34,022	384,000	55,000	439,000	2·8	9·6	1·3	5·5	
Assam ..	*	*	37,193	286,508	42,324	328,832	3·8	11·7	2·1	7·3	*details not available.
Total ..			1,142,948	6,864,899	1,578,151	8,443,050	3·3	10·2	2·5	6·5	

Note.—The proposed electorate is taken on the basis of the franchise for the present legislative councils, but in the case of the Central Provinces the electorate has been doubled. To the women's electorate has been added the number of women who would be qualified on the literacy qualification. The additional depressed class electors have not been added.

CHAPTER XXI.—SPECIAL REPRESENTATION IN THE FEDERAL LEGISLATURE.

417. Pending a decision on the communal question, it is not possible to arrive at any precise figures for the representation of special interests in the Federal Legislature. We can, therefore, only discuss the general basis upon which we think they should be represented, though in the case of women, labour, landlords, and commerce, as suggested by the Round Table Conference, we have suggested certain tentative figures. We desire to add that some of our number have felt considerably hampered in dealing with the questions discussed in this chapter by the fact that the communal issue has not yet been decided, and they reserve their right to reconsider their recommendations in the light of the decision that may eventually be reached.

Women.

418. Though women will be able to compete for Assembly seats on the same terms as men, it is unlikely that they will be returned, except possibly in a few isolated cases, in the early years of the new constitution. We therefore think it is essential that, in the Assembly as in the provincial legislatures, a certain number of seats should be reserved for women. We suggest that each province should return one woman member to the Federal Assembly—a total of nine—to watch over matters in which women are specially interested. We have considered various methods by which these women should be elected, by special constituencies of educated or literate women, by one of the ordinary constituencies in which the electors should have two votes, one of which must be cast for a woman candidate, and also a suggestion that the women gaining the largest proportionate number of votes in ordinary constituencies should have the option, in order, of going to the Assembly instead of to the council. There are obvious objections to all these courses, and we have finally decided that the best method would be for the woman member of the Assembly to be elected by the provincial council, which will themselves contain both men and women, and will be elected by the votes of both men and women. We feel that the objections which have been raised to the co-option of a number of women to reserved seats in the councils themselves do not apply to the choice of a single woman representative by these councils to sit in the Assembly. We think that the councils should be free to elect women, either from their own members or from outside, but that, as is now the general rule, no woman should be nominated for election to the Federal Assembly without her own consent. We have considered whether the provincial council should be confined to electing from among women nominated by recognised women's associations, and we have rejected the idea, partly because we think that the council itself should be left a free hand, and partly because no such right could be conferred on women's associations without bringing them under statutory regulation in some form.

Depressed classes.

419. We have received very few statistics regarding the number of the depressed classes who will obtain admission to the electoral roll which we propose for the federal lower house, but in Bombay they number only 29,000 and in Madras 58,000, while it is reported that in nine constituencies in the Central Provinces they number only 2,478 out of a total electorate of 44,479, or 6 per cent. For the other provinces we have received no figures. It is obvious that if the existing franchise for the provincial councils is to be the franchise for the future federal lower house, the strength of the depressed class electorate for that house will be very small.

420. For the reasons which we have given in chapter X we consider that when necessary a differential qualification should be prescribed for the depressed classes, and we now recommend that the literacy qualification should be added to the general qualification in their case for admission to the electorate for the federal lower house. We have ascertained from the Census Commissioner that these qualifications together will enfranchise at least 2 per cent. of the depressed class population, and in view of the fact that we propose to enfranchise only 3 per cent. of the general population, we consider that this proposal is, for the present, adequate.

Commerce.

421. The Federal Legislature will deal with the major aspects of commercial, industrial, and financial policy. There is no guarantee that persons qualified to speak with expert knowledge on these largely technical matters will be returned by the general constituencies. The civil service, which will advise the Ministers, has knowledge of the ordinary administration of the country, but usually has had no experience of those great commercial and industrial and banking undertakings which are coming to play a rapidly increasing part in the life of every community in the modern world. We think, therefore, that in order that the legislature may be better equipped to deal with economic subjects, a certain number of seats should be filled by representatives of commerce and industry directly chosen by Chambers of Commerce and other equivalent bodies for the purpose of speaking in the legislatures from the expert and technical point of view. It is not, however, necessary that their numbers should be large, for only a limited number of men of the requisite standing can find time to attend the sessions of the Central Legislature and take an active part in politics. At present Indian commerce is represented by four members of the Assembly elected by commercial constituencies in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and European commerce by three elected members in the Council of State and by one member of the Assembly who is nominated by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India. The anomalous nature

of the representation of European commerce has frequently been the subject of complaint, and we propose that in future all commercial representation should be concentrated in the Assembly. We would allot four seats in the Assembly to Indian commerce and four to European commerce, three members in each case to be elected as at present by the commercial organisations in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, which are specified below, one seat being allotted in respect of Indian Chambers to the All-India Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce, and another in respect of European commerce to the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India for the election in each case of a representative of commerce from the areas outside the three Presidencies. We have considered the possibility of amalgamating the representation of European and Indian commerce in joint electorates but we are assured that this step would not meet with the approval of the European commercial bodies, and that at least some Indian concerns would prefer to maintain separate electorates. We do not, therefore, wish to press for amalgamation, but we think that the matter should be borne in mind, and that if hereafter Indian and European commercial interests can agree to combine for the purpose of representation in the legislatures, effect should be given to this arrangement. For the present, we recommend that the representation of commerce in the Federal Assembly should be allotted as follows :—

Indian Commerce—	
Bengal National Chamber of Commerce	1
South India Chamber of Commerce	1
Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau.. ..	1
The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce should be empowered to elect a member to represent provinces other than the three Presidencies	1
European Commerce—	
Bengal Chamber of Commerce	1
Bombay Chamber of Commerce	1
Madras Chamber of Commerce	1
The Associated Chambers of Commerce should be empowered to elect a member to represent provinces other than the three Presidencies ..	1

Labour.

422. Under the new constitution, labour will be to a large extent a central subject, under the general control of the federal legislature, and it is of great importance in these circumstances to secure representation for it as a special interest in that body. Moreover, the franchise proposed by us for the federal legislature will not bring on the electoral roll the same proportion of the working classes, as in the case of the provincial legislatures. It is, therefore, essential to find some direct representation for labour in the centre.

We accordingly recommend that eight seats should be set aside for labour in the Federal Assembly, a number which will give it a representation equal in strength to that proposed in the case of commerce.

423. The question of the method of election to these seats, and of their allocation, is one of some difficulty. The alternatives before us are—

(i) election through trade unions,
(ii) special labour constituencies, and
(iii) the combination of both.

We are in favour of the first method. In the case of plantation labour and the jute industry, where trade unions do not exist or are too weak at present, the method of labour representation should be further considered at the time of the delimitation of constituencies. The qualifications of electors and candidates should be the same as those recommended in the case of trade union constituencies in provinces, except that the number of electors to each electoral delegate should be 300 and not 100.

424. The whole question will have to be considered in detail at a later stage when constituencies are being delimited. It has been suggested to us that the following interests deserve special consideration :—jute, transport (including railways), textiles, seamen, planting, and mining. We suggest further that one seat might be filled through the All-India Trade Union Federation to represent general labour interests falling outside the categories mentioned.

425. It has been pointed out that the allocation of representation on a functional basis may create difficulties in connection with the provincial quotas in the federal legislature, and this matter will also require consideration.

Landlords.

426. As regards landlords, the Statutory Commission considered that the great landlords were at present returned in such numbers to the legislatures by the general constituencies that the special protection now furnished might safely be withdrawn, but that if candidates of this class were not returned in the proportion now guaranteed to them there should be power to nominate such members up to that proportion. Under the franchise proposed by us, however, representation both in the provinces and in the federal legislature will tend to become more popular in character. It has further been urged that the most important interests of landholders will in future be the exclusive concern of the provincial legislatures, and that it is unnecessary to give them special representation in the Federal Assembly. The majority of us do not agree with this view. The existing landlords' electorates in the different provinces consist in the main of men of position who exercise a substantial influence in the countryside. We think that it might be a matter

of legitimate grievance if their representation were taken away altogether when both the electorate and the size of the legislatures are being increased. But while it is important and fair that such interests should not go unrepresented in the Assembly, it is not necessary that their existing representation should be increased in proportion to the increase in the size of the Assembly, and we recommend that a landlord's constituency should be retained for each province which has one at present, i.e., Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces, the Punjab, Bihar and Orissa and the Central Provinces. The detailed arrangements for the constitution of the landlords' constituencies should be further examined at the stage when the constituencies are being delimited.

The Minor Provinces.

427. The suggestion was made in the third report of the Federal Structure Committee of the Round Table Conference that one seat each should be allotted to Delhi, Ajmer-Merwara and Coorg in the Federal Assembly. We were unable to visit any of these provinces except Delhi or to go into their needs in any detail. We therefore make no recommendations regarding them, but we received strong representations regarding the advisability of allotting a second seat to Delhi, and we think this matter might be further considered when the general distribution of seats for the federal legislatures is under examination.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

428. We cannot conclude without referring to the debt which we owe to the Secretariat. Mr. T. C. S. Jayaratnam, I.C.S. and Mr. J. G. Laithwaite have acted jointly as our principal secretaries throughout our inquiries. Their duties, which would have been heavy in any event, were immensely increased by the speed at which we have been forced to work. It is true to say that without their assistance it would have been impossible for us to conclude our task within the time allotted ; their experience and advice have been most useful to us in all circumstances, and it is impossible to speak too highly of the efficiency with which they carried out their duties.

We are also indebted to our Publicity Officer, Mr. I. M. Stephens, for the admirable tact and discretion with which he handled his difficult task. Not the least valuable effect of the work of our Committee was the public confidence created by the knowledge that the work of the Round Table Conference was being actively carried to a determined conclusion. Mr. Stephens at an early period established excellent relations with the Press of all shades of opinion and his work not only kept the public fully informed of the progress of our proceedings, but was also of great value by eliciting in the newspapers the expression of very varied views which were most useful to us in estimating the probable reaction of public opinion to our proposals.

We also wish to acknowledge the valuable help we have received from our Assistant Secretaries. Mr. S. P. Thompson, I.C.S., has throughout been of great assistance to us in connection with the general work of the Committee, while on Mr. F. H. T. Ward has fallen the heavy burden, which he has admirably discharged, of arranging the many details necessary for the transport of 40 people over 7,000 miles in comfort and security.

Finally we wish to pay a very high tribute to the unflagging cheerfulness and energy of our entire office staff. The accuracy and speed with which they have carried out their duties has been beyond all praise, and the conditions of work during so extensive and rapid a tour have often been extremely difficult for them. A special word of commendation is required for our Superintendent, Rai Sahib D. N. Maitra, whose capacity for organisation has throughout been excellent.

Supplementary Notes and Minute of Dissent.

429. We append notes of a supplementary character by certain of our colleagues on points arising out of our report. Messrs. Tambe, Chintamani, and Bakhale have signed the report subject to the minute of dissent which follows.* Some comments by a majority of our Committee on the questions dealt with in that minute will be found on page 247.

We have the honour to be,
SIR,
Your obedient servants,

LOTHIAN, *Chairman.*
J. H. KERR.
B. R. AMBEDKAR.
M. AZIZ-UL-HUQUE.
R. R. BAKHALE.†
E. N. BENNETT.‡
R. A. BUTLER.
C. Y. CHINTAMANI.†
DUFFERIN AND AVA.
E. MILLER.
J. MILNER.
A. RAMASWAMI MUDALIYAR,
MARY PICKFORD
K. RADHABAI SUBBARAYAN.
SUNDER SINGH MAJITHIA.
S. B. TAMBE.†
MOHAMMAD YAKUB.
ZULFIQAR ALI KHAN.

T. C. S. JAYARATNAM, J. G. LAITHWAITE } *Secretaries.*

Simla, the 1st May, 1932.

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* Page 221. † Subject to minute of dissent.
‡ Signed in London on 19th May, 1932.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE.

[*This summary was prepared in the Secretariat after the Committee had dispersed. For authoritative statements of the Committee's recommendations, reference should be made to the text of the Report.*]

PART I.—THE BASIS OF THE FRANCHISE.

Adult Franchise.—In agreement with all local Governments and provincial Committees, the Committee are of opinion that, great as would be its advantages, the introduction of complete adult franchise is impracticable in India to-day alike for administrative and for more general reasons (Chapter II, paras. 16–39).

Modifications of Adult Franchise.—The Committee have also examined, but rejected, for the reasons shown in the text, the following possible modifications of adult franchise :—

(*a*) adult suffrage by indirect voting—the whole population being grouped in groups of, say, 20, 50, 100, or some other appropriate number, each primary group to elect from among its own numbers one or more secondary electors, who should form the constituencies for returning members to the legislatures in the ordinary way (Chapter III, paras. 42–47) ;

(*b*) the introduction of adult suffrage within certain age limits (chapter III, para. 48) ;

(*c*) adult suffrage in large towns (Chapter III, para. 49) ;

(*d*) a system of household suffrage (para. 50) ;

(*e*) a system of indirect voting by elected members of local boards (para. 51).

They have also considered, but rejected, a system of franchise based on the combination of the direct and indirect systems of franchise (Chapter IV, paras. 52–56).

The Committee have also examined the suggestion that the franchise for the new legislatures should remain substantially as it is to-day because of the risk of combining an extension of the franchise with the introduction of responsible government, but have decided that the existing basis of franchise is unsatisfactory and inadequate.

The Committee's recommendations.—In the light of examination of the systems referred to above, the Committee recommend the extension of the direct franchise on a basis which will provide, as

far as is practicable, as laid down in their letter of instructions, that " no important section of the community lacks the means of expressing its needs and its opinions." They agree with the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference in considering that the franchise in the provinces should be so extended as to enfranchise between 10 and 25 per cent. of the population providing at the same time for a proper distribution of voting power between different sections of the people (Chapter V, paras. 57–65). Their recommendations for the federal franchise will be found on page 169).

PART II.—THE PROVINCES.

Chapters VI and VII.—The basis of the Franchise and the Provincial Franchise Schemes.

The Committee recommend that the franchise in all the provinces should be based on the following qualifications :—

(*a*) *Property.*—The Committee recommend that property, which has been the basis for the franchise hitherto, should be retained as one qualification for the vote, but that the level should be so reduced so as to enfranchise a much larger proportion of the population. The property qualification proposed will vary in nature and level with the different circumstances of each province and a uniform qualification is in the Committee's view impracticable.

(*b*) *Education.*—The Committee also propose that an educational qualification should be introduced which will be independent of property, and which should, so far as possible, be uniform throughout the country. The Committee recommend in the case of men the Upper Primary or a corresponding educational standard, and in the case of women literacy only.

In addition they recommend, for reasons explained later, the enfranchisement of the following :—

(1) Wives of men who possess the property qualifications prescribed for the present provincial councils.

(2) Members of special constituencies to be created for labour.

(3) Members of the depressed classes for whom special franchise qualifications may be prescribed.

(4) Income-tax payers.

The effect of these proposals will be to increase the electoral roll from 7 millions to over 36 millions, of whom 29,382,000 will be men and 6,620,000 women, and to enfranchise about 14·1 per cent.

of the total population, and about 27·6 per cent. of the total adult population. The proportion of adult males who will be enfranchised will be 43·4 per cent., and the proportion of adult females 10·5 per cent. (paras. 68–76; 81–85).

Chapter VIII.—Women's franchise and representation.

Franchise.—The Committee have aimed at securing in the electorate a proportion of about one woman to four men. Since the number of women who would be enfranchised under the property and educational qualifications proposed would be inadequate to secure this they propose in addition to enfranchise women who are literate and women who are the wives of men with the property qualification at present prescribed for the provincial legislative councils. Not more than one women elector, in addition to the husband himself, should be enfranchised under the husband's property qualification. A woman who has qualified for the vote in the life time of her husband should continue to have the vote after her husband's death, but on remarriage should cease to be qualified in respect of her late husband (paras. 215–216).

The Committee's proposals increase the male electorate four-and-a-half times and the women's electorate 21 times (para. 217).

The total women's electorate for the provincial Legislatures will be approximately 6,620,000.

Representation.—In addition to the increased electorate proposed the Committee recommend reservation for women during the first 10 years of from two to five per cent. of seats in the provincial councils. Pending a decision on the communal question and the determination of the exact number of seats in each provincial Legislature they can make no more detailed recommendation as to the number of seats which should be reserved for women. The seats to be reserved should be reserved in special general constituencies, urban or rural, formed for the purpose, and containing both men and women. No definite suggestions regarding the formation of such constituencies can be put forward at this stage, but they should be determined when the territorial constituencies are being delimited (para. 220).

Chapter IX.—Representation of labour in the provincial Legislatures.

I. *Agricultural Labour.*—The Committee after consideration of various suggestions—the group system, household suffrage, a wage earner's franchise, a house rental qualification—record the conclusion that short of an extension of the franchise to a degree which they regard as impracticable at the present stage, there is no means of

enfranchising agricultural labour as such. But they are satisfied that under the franchise recommended it will secure a certain representation in the legislatures. This is more particularly the case in view of the proposals for the enfranchisement of the depressed classes, which provide so large a percentage of agricultural labour (paras. 227–233). They equally do not recommend special representation for agricultural labour in the legislatures, and reject a suggestion that seats might be reserved for landless labour in multi-member constituencies in rural areas containing more than a fixed percentage of this class (para. 234).

II. *Industrial Labour.*—The Committee are unable to accept trade unions as the sole basis of representation (para. 246) and cannot regard nomination as a satisfactory solution of the problem (para. 243). They recommend special representation for industrial labour through constituencies based on registered trade unions and special labour constituencies of the nature described below (paras. 245–246).

The Committee regard it as of extreme importance to avoid any overlapping between the trade union and the special labour constituencies, whether in the same industry or the same geographical area. In view of the impossibility of dealing adequately with this problem in the time available, they confine themselves to recommending the total number of seats which should in their view be set aside for the representation of labour in the provincial Legislatures, leaving (save where they feel in a position to express a provisional opinion) the allocation of these seats as between trade union and industrial constituencies for settlement later in connection with the general delimitation of constituencies (para. 253).

On the above basis the Committee recommend that 38 seats in all be set aside for labour in the provincial Legislatures, as compared with nine at present (para. 276). Their detailed proposals are as follows :—Madras 6, Bombay 8, Bengal 8, the United Provinces 3, the Punjab 3, Bihar and Orissa 4, the Central Provinces 2, and Assam 4 (paras. 255–275).

In the case of trade union constituencies a union in order to qualify as an electoral unit should have been registered for a minimum period of one year and have a minimum strength of 100. If a trade union exists in any industry or trade for which a special constituency is provided, it should be combined, for electoral purposes, with other trade unions in the same area or province (para. 250). Where a trade union constituency is confined to a single area voting might be direct ; where it covers two or more different centres election should be through an electoral college composed of delegates elected in each union in the proportion of one for each group of 100 workers. Seats might, if conditions make it feasible and desirable, be set aside among the trade union seats to be filled by representatives of particular trade unions of special importance or a specially large membership (para. 247).

The qualifications suggested for electors in trade union constituencies are a minimum age of 21 and paying membership for at least six months of a registered trade union which has itself been in existence for at least twelve months. [For the first election under the new constitution the Committee recommend as a special case membership for a minimum of three months of a registered trade union which has been in existence for at least six months (para. 248.)] A candidate for a trade union constituency should be either a member or an honorary member or an official as defined in the Trade Unions Act of the trade unions concerned, his position in any of these capacities to be of not less than one year's standing (para. 249).

The electorate of the special *labour constituencies* should include workers on the roll of any factory or other industrial undertaking employing a minimum of 10 persons.

The qualifications suggested for electors (para. 251) are a minimum age of 21 and continuous employment with any employer for a period of six months prior to the preparation or revision of the electoral roll. The clerical and supervising staff should not be eligible as electors (para. 251). The Committee think it important that candidates should be in a position genuinely to represent the mass of the working class population in the constituencies they represent, but are not agreed as to the qualifications to be required (para. 252).

Chapter X.—Depressed Classes.

Definition.—The Committee consider that the term Depressed Classes should be applied to those only who are known as " untouchables ", according to heads (7) and (8) of the census definition of 1911. They should not include primitive or aboriginal tribes, or those Hindus within the Hindu pale who are economically poor and in other ways backward but are not regarded as untouchables (paras. 282–283).

Numbers.—The Committee accept the following as the numbers of the depressed classes in the provinces specified (paras. 288–291) :—

Madras	7,100,000
Bombay	1,700,000
Bihar and Orissa	4,300,000
Central Provinces	2,900,000
Assam	655,000

In Bengal, the United Provinces, and the Punjab, they are unable, on the information available at the date of signature, to give final figures, but they recommend that investigations on the basis of the census definition above should be pursued with a view to a decision. If a local Government is satisfied that a particular caste or a great

majority of a caste does not wish to be treated as a depressed class, its wishes should be respected. Further consideration will be given to the revised lists at the next stage (para. 299).

In so far as the other qualifications will not bring the number of depressed class voters on the roll up to 10 per cent. of the depressed class population, the Committee recommend the adoption of some form of differential franchise with the object of bringing a larger number of depressed classes on the electoral roll than would otherwise be possible and suggest action on the following lines :—

(*a*) enfranchisement of village servants in Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces,

(*b*) the enfranchisement of members of the depressed classes who are literate.

They would leave full discretion to local Governments as to the further measures, if any, to be adopted in order to produce a satisfactory level of enfranchisement ; but recommend that every effort should be made in all provinces to bring the depressed class electorate up to their population ratio, or in any event as near as possible to 10 per cent. of their population strength, except in Bihar and Orissa, where the general proportion of enfranchisement is only nine per cent. of the total population ; and they place on record certain suggestions made for achieving this object.

Chapter XI.—Minor Minorities and Special Interests.

Minor Minorities.—The majority of the Committee agree in principle that representation should be secured to Europeans, Indian Christians and Anglo-Indians in the new legislatures, but pending a decision of the communal question are unable to make recommendations as to the number of seats which should be allotted to these minorities (para. 316).

Special Interests.—The Committee recommend that the seats at present allotted to commerce, industry, landlords, and universities should be retained but that their number should not be increased proportionately to any increase in the size of the legislatures. The re-arrangement or re-distribution of the seats allotted to landlords and commerce should be further considered at the stage of the delimitation of constituencies (paras. 322, 323, 333), as should the amalgamation of university seats, which has been recommended by some provinces (para. 336). The commercial and industrial organisations now recognised for the purpose of representation in the legislatures are in their view fully capable of representing the interests of industry and commerce as such, and they do not in these circumstances recommend any increase in the number of the existing commercial constituencies. The Committee reserve the right, if necessary, to modify their recommendations in the light of the

communal settlement (para. 338). The Committee think that the suggestion that the names of those firms which are members of the Chambers of Commerce which elect to the commercial seats should appear on the electoral roll, and that the firm should depute someone to act on its behalf in an electoral capacity merits consideration in those provinces in which this is not already the practice (para. 325).

The Committee do not feel justified in supporting a suggestion that Indian and European business organisations should elect their representatives through a joint electorate. There has been no demand from the Indian commercial community for joint representation while the Committee are satisfied that the European Chambers of Commerce are at present averse from joint electorates. Unless and until a mutual understanding is reached between European and Indian Commerce, the Committee would not feel justified in modifying the existing position.

In the case of the universities the majority of the Committee consider that the balance of advantage rests with election by the registered graduates, and not by the Senate or court alone, one important argument in favour of this view being the fact that in many cases the Senate is largely formed by nomination.

Chapter XII.—Aboriginals and Hill Tribes.

It is essential that the interests of the aboriginals and hill tribes should be protected by effective representation in the councils, or if this is not possible, by some other arrangement in the new constitution. The Committee have been unable in the time at their disposal to make any adequate investigation of the subject, and cannot therefore put forward any definite proposals, but they recommend that the matter should be further investigated by the local Governments concerned, and brought up at a later stage when the time comes for the delimitation of constituencies (para. 343). Meanwhile they place on record certain suggestions put forward and commend to the attention of the local Governments of Assam, Bihar and Orissa, the Central Provinces, and possibly Madras, consideration of the possibility of a system of election by the local village headmen (para. 341) ; and strongly recommend the adoption of some method of election, if found to be practicable, in preference to nomination (para. 341). They accept the view that the aboriginals are an entirely distinct community from the depressed classes, and that under no circumstances should the two communities be amalgamated for purposes of representation (para. 342).

Chapter XIII.—The Military Service Qualification.

The majority of the Committee recommend the retention of the existing military service qualification but are opposed to its extension to members, whether serving or retired, of the Indian Auxiliary or the

Indian Territorial Forces. They are unable to recommend the creation of special military constituencies of a non-communal character.

Chapter XIV.—Size of the Provincial Legislatures.

A final decision as to the size and composition of the legislatures must await the settlement of the communal question. In the meantime the Committee recommend, subject to modification in detail after the communal decision has been given, that the size of the new legislatures in the provinces should be approximately that suggested by local Governments and provincial committees, i.e., between two and three times the present number of elected members (para. 360). The increase proposed will swell the total number of members of the provincial councils from 872 of whom 667 are elected to between 1,500 and 1,750, according to whether there is a second chamber or not (para. 363).

Chapter XV.—Multi-member and single-member constituencies.

The question is one on which no final opinion can be expressed at this stage since it lies at the core of the communal problem, which is beyond the Committee's terms of reference (para. 367). They recommend however the use of the cumulative vote, in preference to the restrictive vote, in such multi-member constituencies as may be established (para. 369). They are unanimously opposed to the introduction of the second ballot on the grounds of the expense and delay involved (para. 371), and to the introduction of the alternative vote because of the complications to which it would give rise at a time when the extension of the electorate up to the limits of administrative manageability is being proposed (para. 373).

The majority of the Committee see no reason to depart from the recommendation of the Government of Bombay and the Bombay Provincial Committee that the present arrangement under which seats are reserved for Mahrattas in general non-Muslim constituencies in Bombay should continue (para. 368).

Chapter XVI.—The Second Chamber in Provinces.

The question whether the provincial legislatures of the future should be bicameral is really a constitutional issue which is beyond the scope of the Committee's terms of reference. Until these issues are settled it would be useless to frame detailed schemes for the franchise or the composition of the second chambers, if any, which are to be set up in the different provinces. The Committee record the main arguments which have been brought forward on each side but refrain from making any proposals (para. 385).

Chapter XVII.—Minor Local Administrations : Delhi, Coorg, and Ajmer-Merwara.

The Committee have been unable to investigate the question of the franchise as affecting these provinces in any detail or to visit any of them save Delhi, and are not in a position to make any recommendations regarding them. They think, however, in the case of Delhi that the franchise system of the neighbouring provinces would probably be found suitable and express the opinion that all these questions should be examined at a later stage during the delimitation of the constituencies after they have been further considered by the local administrations concerned in the light of the Committee's report (para. 395).

PART III.—THE FEDERATION.

Chapter XVIII.—Introductory : Allocation of seats between provinces of British India in the Federal legislature.

No case has been made out for modifying the allocation of seats in the Federal legislature between the provinces proposed by the Federal Structure Committee, and the Committee are satisfied that it could not be altered for one province without doing injustice to the other provinces (para. 398).

Chapter XIX.—The Senate.

The Committee agree with the Federal Structure Committee in recommending that the members of the Senate should be elected by the provincial legislatures by the system of the single transferable vote (para. 399).

They recommend no increase in the number of members of the Senate (para. 400).

They would leave provincial legislatures free to choose from among their own members or from outside whoever they think would make the best representative of the province in the Senate. They are, on the whole, in favour of filling the seats vacated in provincial legislatures through the election of members to the Senate by bye-election. Simultaneous tenure of a seat in the provincial and the federal legislature should be barred in the constitution. The communal issue may have to be taken into account among other considerations in reaching a final decision on the question whether the Senate should be elected as a whole immediately after each general election or re-elected as to one-third or one-half, say, every three years, and the Committee therefore content themselves with stating the alternatives and the arguments for them (para. 401).

Chapter XX.—The Federal Assembly.

In the case of the Federal Assembly no less than of the provincial legislatures the only way forward is not indirect election but the extension of the system of direct election (para. 404).

The Committee recommend, for electoral reasons, the increase of the number of seats allotted to British India under the scheme provisionally adopted by the Federal Structure Committee from 200 to 300. The distribution of seats between the provinces should however be in the same proportion as that recommended by the Federal Structure Committee (para. 405).

The Committee have considered the possibility of using the same franchise qualifications for the Assembly as they have proposed for the provincial councils but have rejected it partly on the ground of the inexperience of the new provincial electorate and partly on the ground that in present conditions the constituencies would be so large in area and would contain such a number of electors as to be unmanageable.

They recommend the adoption as the franchise for the Federal Assembly of the franchise now in force for provincial legislative councils supplemented by an educational qualification for both men and women. The educational qualification in the case of men should be the possession of the Matriculation or School Leaving Certificate or the equivalent in the case of *madrassas*, *patshalas*, and other vernacular schools. In the case of women since education has made much less progress among women, it should be the attainment of the upper primary standard. As this proposal will only enfranchise less than 500,000 women as against some 6,800,000 men the Committee recommend that all women enfranchised under the literacy qualification for the provincial councils should be added to the first Assembly roll. Thereafter, while the names of all women who have been entered on the roll by reason of literacy should be retained, the qualification for the addition of new women electors should be the upper primary standard. The electorate which will result from acceptance of the Committee's proposals will be approximately 8½ millions. If all those recorded in the census as literate place their names on the roll, the total women's electorate will be about 1,500,000, as compared with a male electorate of about 6,800,000 (para. 409).

In view of the very small size of the existing electorate for the Provincial Council in the Central Provinces the Committee recommend that the electorate in that Province for the Federal Assembly should be double the electorate for the present Council and that the local Government should so revise the franchise qualifications as to ensure this result (para. 411).

The total electorate for the Federal Assembly under their proposals will be between 8 and 9 millions, as compared with a present electorate of 1,140,000. The Committee suggest that provision should be made

in the constitution for a reconsideration of the franchise for British India in the case of the Federal Assembly after a definite period (para. 412).

Chapter XXI.—Special Representation in the Federal Legislature.

The tentative recommendations of the Committee are as follows. They reserve the right to modify them, if necessary, in the light of the communal decision :—

(*a*) *Women.*—Each province should return one woman member to the Federal Assembly—a total of nine—to watch over matters in which women are specially interested. The method of election should be election by the provincial legislative councils which will themselves contain both men and women and which will be elected by the votes of both men and women. The council should be free to elect either from their own members or from outside, but no woman should be nominated to the Federal Assembly without her own consent (para. 418).

(*b*) *Depressed classes.*—In order to bring a reasonable number of the members of the depressed classes on the electoral roll the literacy qualification should be added in their case to the general qualification for admission to the electorate for the Federal Lower House. These qualifications together will enfranchise at least 2 per cent. of the depressed class population, and in view of the fact that it is proposed to enfranchise only 3 per cent. of the general population, the Committee consider that this proposal is, for the present, adequate (para. 420).

(*c*) *Commerce.*—In future all commercial representation should be concentrated in the Assembly. The Committee would for the present allot four seats to Indian Commerce and four to European Commerce. They have considered the possibility of amalgamating the representation of European and Indian Commerce in joint electorates but are assured that this step would not meet with the approval of the European Commercial bodies, and that at least some Indian concerns would prefer to maintain separate electorates. They do not therefore wish to press for amalgamation, but think that the matter should be borne in mind, and that if hereafter Indian and European commercial interests can agree to combine for the purpose of representation in the legislatures, effect should be given to this arrangement (para. 421).

(*d*) *Labour.*—Eight seats should be set aside for labour in the Federal Assembly, a number which will give it a representation equal to that proposed for Commerce. Election should as far as possible be through trade unions. In the case of plantation labour and the jute industry, where trade unions do not exist or

are too weak at present, the method of labour representation should be further considered at the time of the delimitation of constituencies. The qualifications of electors and candidates should be the same as those recommended in the case of trade union constituencies in provinces, except that the number of electors to each electoral delegate should be 300 and not 100 (paras. 422–423).

The question as a whole will have to be reconsidered at a later stage when constituencies are being delimited. Meanwhile the Committee place on record a suggestion that the following interests deserve special consideration:—jute, transport (including railways), textiles, seamen, planting, and mining. They suggest further that one seat should be filled through the All-India Trade Union Federation to represent general labour interests falling outside the categories mentioned (para. 424).

The question whether the allocation of representation on a functional basis may give rise to difficulties in connection with the provincial quotas in the federal legislature will also require consideration (para. 425).

(*e*) *Landlords.*—The majority of the Committee favour the retention of special representation for landlords in the Federal Assembly, but do not think it necessary to increase their existing representation in proportion to the increase in the size of the Assembly. They recommend that a landlord's constituency be retained for each province which has one at present, i.e., Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces, the Punjab, Bihar and Orissa, and the Central Provinces. The detailed arrangements for the constitution of the landlords' constituencies should be further examined at the stage when the constituencies are being delimited (para. 426).

(*f*) *Minor Provinces.*—The Committee were unable to visit any of these provinces save Delhi or to go into their needs in any detail, and they make no recommendations regarding them, but they have received strong representations as to the advisability of allotting a second seat to Delhi, in addition to that which it would receive if the suggestion made in the final report of the Federal Structure Committee were accepted, and think this matter might be further considered when the general distribution of seats for the Federal Assembly is under examination (para. 427).

POINTS LEFT OVER FOR SUBSEQUENT EXAMINATION AND DECISION.

[*This list of points was prepared in the Secretariat after the Committee had dispersed. For authoritative statements of the Committee's proposals, reference should be made to the text of the Report.*]

The Prime Minister's letter of instructions (Appendix I) contemplated that the Franchise Committee should, in addition to the matters covered by its present report, submit "complete and detailed proposals for the arrangement of constituencies for the new legislatures, Central and Provincial", and expressed the hope that the Committee would "be in a position in due course so to present a complete and detailed scheme for the composition of each of the provincial legislatures and the Federal Legislature". The question whether the provincial legislatures of the future should be unicameral or bicameral is one which will clearly have to be considered before final recommendations can be made about the size and composition of those legislatures; while the representation, if any, to be provided in the legislatures for the peoples of the excluded areas will also require consideration. A further important question for consideration is the qualifications and disqualifications of candidates for the legislatures.

Apart from the major questions referred to above on which the Committee's Report contains either no recommendations or recommendations of a provisional character, there are a number of points of varying importance arising out of, or included in, its recommendations on which no final proposals are, or can be, made at this stage and which will require further consideration, for the most part either after the decision of the communal question or at the stage of the delimitation of constituencies. A list of these questions is appended.

I.—QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION IN THE LIGHT OF THE COMMUNAL DECISION.

1. *Minor Minorities.*—Number of seats to be allotted in the provincial legislatures (para. 316).

2. *Special Interests.*—The proposals of the Committee for the number of seats to be allotted to special interests in the provincial legislatures are subject to the reservation that some revision may be necessary in the light of the communal decision (para. 318).

3. *Size of Provincial Legislatures.*—The recommendations of the Committee can only be made precise once the communal decision has been reached (para. 360).

4. *Method of election of the Federal Upper House.*—The communal issue may have to be taken into account in deciding whether the Senate should be elected as a whole, immediately after each general election, or by one-third or one-half at a time say every three years. The Committee in these circumstances have made no final recommendation on the point (para. 401).

5. *Representation of special interests in the Federal Assembly.*—The number of seats suggested by the Committee is subject to the reservation that some revision may be necessary after a decision on the communal question has been reached (para. 417).

II.—QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE STAGE OF THE DELIMITATION OF CONSTITUENCIES.

The Provinces.

1. *Women.*—The Committee are unable in their Report to make final suggestions regarding the formation of women's constituencies, but these should be determined when the territorial constituencies are being delimited (para. 220).

2. *Labour.*—The allocation of the seats proposed for labour in the provincial legislatures as between trade union and special labour constituencies will have to be determined in connection with the general delimitation of constituencies (para. 253) [see also paras. 257 (Madras); 259 (Bombay); 262 (Bengal); 264 (United Provinces); 266 (Punjab); 270 (Bihar and Orissa); and 272 (Central Provinces).]

3. *Rural and Urban representation.*—The question of the relative representation of town and country in the legislatures should be examined when constituencies are delimited. The matter is of special importance in Madras, Bombay, and possibly also in Bengal (para. 95).

4. *Special interests in provincial legislatures.*

Commerce; Landlords.—The question of the re-arrangement or redistribution of the commercial and landlord constituencies of which the retention is recommended should be further examined at the stage of the delimitation of constituencies (paras. 323 and 333).

Universities.—Some provinces have recommended the amalgamation of university seats, and this question should be further considered at the stage of the delimitation of constituencies (para. 336).

5. *Aboriginal Tribes.*—The problem of their representation should be further examined by the local Governments concerned, and brought up for consideration when the time comes for the delimitation of constituencies (para. 343).

6. *Minor Local Administrations* (Delhi, Coorg, Ajmer-Merwara).—The franchise problem in relation to these provinces should be reconsidered at a later stage during the delimitation of constituencies, after they have been further considered by the local administrations in the light of the Franchise Committee's report (para. 395).

Federal Legislature.

7. *Representation of Special Interests. Labour.*

(i) In the case of plantation labour and of the jute industry, where Trade Unions do not at present exist, or are too weak to serve as a basis of representation, the method by which labour is to be represented should be further considered at the time of the delimitation of constituencies (para. 423)

(ii) The method by which the labour representatives should be elected will have to be considered in detail at a later stage when the constituencies are being delimited. It has been suggested that the following interests deserve special consideration :—jute, transport (including railways), textiles, seamen, planting, mining. The Committee further suggest that one seat should be filled through the All-India Trade Union Federation to represent general labour interests falling outside the categories mentioned (para. 424).

Landlords.—The detailed arrangements for the constitution of the landlords constituencies should be further examined at the stage when the constituencies are being delimited (para. 426).

8. *Minor Local Administrations.*—The advisability of allotting a second seat to Delhi in the Federal Assembly might be further considered when the general distribution of seats for the federal legislature is under consideration (para. 427).

III.—MISCELLANEOUS.

The Provinces.

1. As soon as the basis of the new franchise has been approved, instructions should be issued for the immediate preparation of an electoral roll on the qualifications finally accepted. If it proves that the proposals of the Franchise Committee produce

an electorate in which the ratio of voters to population is markedly discrepant in the case of any community, it will be necessary to consider what action, if any, is required in order to rectify the disparity. The information should be made available as soon as possible in view of its importance at the next stage when the constituencies will be delimited (para. 79).

2. *Bengal Provincial Franchise.*

(*a*) The local Government should consider whether the adoption as a basis for the franchise of a literacy qualification will result in bringing on the electoral roll an unduly large number of women, especially in non-Muslim constituencies (para. 136).

(*b*) The local Government's proposals for grouping urban areas in Bengal into constituencies should form the subject of consideration at a later stage of the investigation (para. 137).

3. *Punjab Provincial Franchise.*—The local Government should re-examine the question of the representation of the non-agricultural tribes, and its effect on their general franchise scheme.

4. *Central Provinces Franchise.*—The local Government should further examine the rent and revenue qualifications for different parts of the province which will produce the electorate recommended by us (para. 192).

5. *Depressed Classes.*—Consideration should be given to the lists of depressed classes in the United Provinces, the Punjab and Bengal, so as to arrive at a definite list as soon as possible (para. 299). Local Governments should, when necessary, examine the alternative schemes discussed in paras. 308–314 for the enfranchisement of depressed classes up to 10 per cent. of their population strength.

6. *Commercial seats in Provincial Legislatures.*—The proposal that the name of the firms, which are members of the Chambers of Commerce which elect to the commercial constituencies, should appear on the electoral roll, and that they should be empowered to depute some one to act on their behalf in an electoral capacity, should be considered by those provinces in which this is not already the practice when the delimitation of constituencies is undertaken (para. 325).

Federal Legislature.

7. *The Senate.*—The question whether any action should be taken about those sections of the provincial legislature which will not be able to secure the quota of council members necessary to elect a senator will require consideration (para. 399).

The Assembly:—The Federal Assembly will contain representatives of the States as well as of British India, and the Committee suggest that provision be made in the constitution for a reconsideration of the franchise for British India after a definite period (para. 412).

Representation of Commerce in the Assembly.—The possibility of amalgamating European and Indian Commerce in joint electorates with reservation of seats should be borne in mind, and if hereafter European and Indian Commercial institutions can agree to combine for the purpose of common representation in the legislature, effect should be given to this arrangement (para. 421).

Representation of Labour in the Assembly.—It has been pointed out that the allocation of representation on a functional basis may create difficulties in connection with the provincial quotas in the federal legislature, and this matter will also require consideration (para. 425).

NOTE ON WOMEN'S FRANCHISE BY MAULVI SIR MOHAMMAD YAKUB, KT., M.L.A.

It is a matter of regret for me that I find myself unable to share, fully, the views of my colleagues on the question of women's franchise.

I should like to make it quite clear at the beginning of this note that I am fully sensible of the considerations advanced by the Statutory Commission and the Franchise Committee of the Round Table Conference for the extension of franchise to women on a more liberal basis, and wholeheartedly share their anxiety to remove the existing disparity between the voting strength of the two sexes. I am in full agreement with the recommendations of the Committee giving women the right of vote on the same terms as men. Under the Hindu Law as administered in India, a woman cannot own property without restrictions on her proprietary rights, and some sections of Muslims, in certain provinces, have also adopted that law in this respect, which places women under great disadvantage and they cannot enjoy adequate enfranchisement. It is, therefore, natural that His Majesty's Government should desire, as stated in the Prime Minister's letter addressed to the Chairman of the Indian Franchise Committee, that the system of enfranchisement should be so widened as to bring a larger number of women on the electoral roll than is found at present. I, however, feel there are practical difficulties and serious objections to the creation of any special qualifications in favour of women, apart from those which they are to enjoy with men. In my opinion, the real remedy lies in the removal of those disqualifications which deprive a woman of her birthright of owning property without any restrictions than in creating artificial and extraneous qualifications.

I am fully prepared to concede to the unanimous demand of the representatives of women organisations and women witnesses that the principle of equality between men and women should be the basis of the new Indian constitution. With the lower standard of property qualifications, and the addition of an educational qualification which will automatically increase the numbers every year, recommended by us for men and the adoption of the fundamental right that women should have the right of vote on the same terms as men, I feel sure that the number of women voters will be considerably enlarged. I am, however, mindful of the necessity of taking further steps to ensure that a larger number of women is brought on the electoral roll. To achieve that object, my colleagues recommend :—

(*a*) that in the case of women the minimum educational qualifications should be literacy ;

(*b*) that a wife should have a right of vote if her husband possesses the right, under the property qualification, to vote for the lower Federal Assembly.

But both these recommendations are derogatory to the status of women and entirely opposed to the wishes of the majority of their witnesses. I cannot find any justification for fixing a lower educational qualification for women than is proposed for men. If it is the intention that the voter should intelligently exercise his or her right to vote, the lowering of educational qualification to the extent proposed in the case of women will defeat that object. The enfranchising of women on the qualifications of their husbands is opposed to all the canons of constitutional law. In nine cases out of ten the practical result of this artificial qualification would be to duplicate the husband's vote thus giving to the property qualification an excessive representation, while at the same time it will enhance the urban voting power as compared with the rural and the Hindu as compared with the Muslim.

Where a man has more than one wife my colleagues have solved the difficulty by suggesting that the senior wife only should be enfranchised. This suggestion is open to serious objections. If a woman is to get a vote simply because she happens to be a wife of a voter, all those who possess the status of a wife must enjoy the right. In my opinion, this recommendation will be taken by my community as an indirect aspersion on the restricted polygamy allowed by Islam and is bound to create great resentment amongst them, and especially among women who, while enjoying the status of a wife, will not possess the right of vote. It is also likely to arouse indignation among the Hindus, who are permitted to have any number of wives without any restriction.

It must be remembered that the women of this country have not themselves asked for any artificial qualifications. Indeed, most of their representatives, who have appeared as witnesses before us, have strongly disapproved of the idea of creating any such qualifications. They have demanded that they should be given suffrage on equal terms with men. The object which my colleagues had in view in recommending the above-mentioned artificial qualifications can be achieved to a great extent, if instructions were to issue to provincial Governments that special attention should be paid to the preparation of the rolls for women and special efforts should be made to bring on the electoral roll all the women who possess the necessary qualifications.

In this connection it will not be out of place to refer to the various stages through which the British constitution passed, before women received their present rights. I do not think that it was the intention of His Majesty's Government that these stages should be altogether ignored in the case of India, where women have for centuries suffered great disabilities and have not yet reached the same standard of education and political consciousness as English women.

There is one more point in this connection which needs elucidation, and it is this, that as regards the joint and separate electorate Muslim women will have to be bracketed with their men, and cannot be allowed to go outside the community. It was pointed out that Muslim women witnesses were opposed to communal electorates. But, in the first place, only about half-a-dozen Muslim women, selected by provincial committees were produced before our Committee as witnesses and they cannot be considered as representing the views of all the Muslim women in the country. In the second place what these witnesses demanded was the general adult suffrage, and nothing more and nothing less. The question of separate and joint electorate could not arise according to their recommendations. None of them has advocated joint electorate for Muslim women in case adult suffrage was not granted and separate electorate formed the basis of enfranchisement for the Muslims.

As regards the reservation of some seats for women in the councils, as a temporary measure, to secure their representations, I have no objection to the adoption of such a method, provided separate seats are reserved for Muslim and non-Muslim women in proportion to their numbers in a council, in such a way that it would not disturb the communal representation of the minorities.

It must be borne in mind that the communal settlement is the very foundation of the constitution in India and unless the foundation is soundly laid the safety of the whole structure will be imperilled for ever.

MOHAMMAD YAKUB.

27th April, 1932.

NOTE BY THE HONOURABLE MR. E. MILLER ON THE REPRESENTATION OF LABOUR IN THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES.

While I am in full sympathy with the desire of industrial labour to secure adequate representation in the legislatures, I regret I cannot agree with the majority of my colleagues in the recommendation they have made for the representation of labour in the provincial councils. One of the claims put forward by certain members of the Committee is that labour, so long as special interests are represented at all, should have equal representation with commerce in every legislature, but I can see nothing in this claim to recommend it. What our members representing labour on the Committee have always claimed is the power and function to represent the interests of labour in each legislature and this claim has my full support.

I would suggest that we should provide for the representation of each of the main industries in each province and one seat for the lesser interests. On this basis I recommend the following seats should be provided in the various provinces :—

Bengal—		
Railways	1	
Port Trust and Wharf Labour	1	
Seamen	1	
Jute and other Textiles	1	
Planting	1	
Mining	1	
Other Industrial Labour	1	7
Bombay—		
Railways	1	
Port Trust and Wharf Labour	1	
Seamen	1	
Textiles	1	
Other Industrial Labour	1	5
Madras—		
Railways	1	
Port Trust and Wharf Labour	1	
Seamen	1	
Mining	1	
Planting	1	
Other Industrial Labour	1	6
Bihar and Orissa—		
Planting	1	
Mining	1	
Other Industrial Labour	1	3

Central Provinces—		
Railways	1	
Other Industrial Labour	1	2
(When the Mining Industry again becomes active I recommend a further seat on their account.)		
United Provinces—		
Railways	1	
Textiles	1	
Other Industrial Labour	1	3
Punjab—		
Railways	1	
Factory Labour	1	
Other Industrial Labour	1	3
Assam—		
Planting	1	
Other Industrial Labour	1	2
Total ..		31

In my opinion this will give all industrial labour interests fair representation and is a very generous increase on their present representation in the various provincial legislatures which amounts to nine in all. Although planting is strictly speaking agricultural and not industrial labour, I have included it under the latter category as it is organised and there is therefore no administrative difficulty in giving it separate representation. I would point out that while in the case of commerce the representation recommended leaves it as it is at present in the various provincial legislatures, in spite of the proposal to increase their numbers by two and a half to three times, my suggestions for labour increase its numbers by three and a half times, which is a generous advance and, in my opinion, at this stage it will be as much as the various industrial interests will be able to find suitable candidates with which to fill the seats.

I may also point out that elsewhere I have agreed to eight labour seats in the lower house of the Federal Assembly, not because this number is in line with the commerce seats recommended but on basis of giving a number equal to the number of provinces excluding the North West Frontier Province which has no organised industrial labour to justify it having special representation.

It should also be borne in mind that the proposed lowering of the franchise will bring into both the provincial and central legislatures an increasing number of members who, while perhaps not actually in every case of the labouring class, will include the depressed class representatives and others who will be in close sympathy with labour interests and who will give considerable support to their demands. For all the reasons stated, therefore, I am unable to agree to the recommendations of the majority of the Committee although I would have been ready to concede two more seats rather against my better judgment, but with a view to avoiding the necessity of writing a minute of dissent. I do not, however, agree to a number so high as 38, and feel my above suggestions are really the maximum number of seats that should be allotted at this stage.

E. MILLER.

28th April, 1932.

NOTE BY SARDAR BAHADUR SIR SUNDAR SINGH MAJITHIA, KT., C.I.E.

Representation of landlords.

I am sorry I have to differ from my colleagues as regards the representation of landlords both in the provincial and federal legislatures and do not agree with them that their representation should be the same as they enjoy at present, in spite of the fact that the number of members of these legislatures is being considerably increased. This practically means that their representation will be proportionately decreased from what it is at present. The landlords are an important class and have a substantial stake in the country. Though it might be said that they have secured greater representation through the general constituencies in the past owing to certain circumstances but with a considerable advance of popular representation in the legislatures and the enfranchisement of a comparatively larger section of the population they are not likely to secure any such advantage in future. With the movement of " no rent " campaign in the country it could not be imagined that in future this class will secure any suitable representation in the legislatures of the country. With the wider opportunities and representation given to the general public, the interests of landlords are more likely to suffer, unless they are given a secured suitable representation in the legislatures of the country and their voice in the future administration of the country is effective. The local Governments and the provincial committees of Madras, the United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa and the Central Provinces have proposed larger representation for this class ; Assam, however, has not proposed any representation for landlords. To ignore these recommendations even after admitting as my colleagues do in paragraph 333 of the Report " that they will secure a much smaller proportion than they do at present," will be a sheer injustice to a class which with past traditions has not lagged behind anyone else in the general uplift of the country. I would therefore give them the representation that the local Governments have proposed for them in the various provinces and in the federal legislatures.

SUNDAR SINGH MAJITHIA.

29th April, 1932.

NOTE BY THE MUSLIM MEMBERS OF THE INDIAN FRANCHISE COMMITTEE.

Effect of allocation of seats for special interests on communal representation.

The Report of the Indian Franchise Committee contains a scheme for the representation of women and a provisional allotment of seats for the special interests such as landlords, universities, commerce and industry and labour. As will be seen from paragraph 342 that this is subject to modifications in the light of the decision that may eventually be reached by His Majesty's Government about the communal issue, and the Committee in the above noted paragraph reserve the right to reconsider the recommendations in the light of the communal decision. We are, however, extremely doubtful, if this is sufficient to explain the Muslim point of view and we owe it to ourselves and to the community to explain this in a clear manner.

A perusal of the Report will show that seats have been provisionally allocated to special interests (landlords, universities, commerce, industry and labour) both in the federal as also in provincial legislature and even though the actual number of seats has not been determined, a varying percentage has been laid down for the representation of women in the legislatures. We wish to clearly state that unless these seats are taken into account at the time of distributing seats to different communities, it will, in effect, reduce the Muslim quota in every province, almost by the same numbers as are now being allotted to these special interests (except probably in the Punjab where the disparity may be less marked). We only follow the language of the Committee and the Prime Minister's declaration in stating that " the representation of special interests should not be allowed to affect the balance of power " or " to encroach to an extent which amounts to stultification " of the communal percentage.

In these circumstances our agreement to the tentative allocation of seats to these special interests is subject to the condition that these seats will be taken into account while adjusting communal balance and will not, as a matter of fact, affect the legitimate communal ratio.

(Sd.) ZULFIQAR ALI KHAN.
,, MOHAMMAD YAKUB.
,, M. AZIZUL HUQUE.

NOTE BY MAJOR J. MILNER, M.C., M.P.

I deem it necessary to place on record the fact that I do not find myself in complete agreement with the majority of my colleagues on some of the recommendations made in this Report. For example, in my view the introduction of adult franchise in large towns is both feasible and desirable, the difficulties in the way of a wage earning qualification are overstated, the women's franchise is not what I would wish, and there is not sufficient justification as between the provincial and federal legislatures for the unduly restricted and differential franchise proposed for the latter.

At the same time it is unquestionable that the recommendations in the Report constitute an immense advance on the existing position, and I have been very greatly impressed by the importance of our proposals being presented with the greatest possible measure of unanimity. If a committee so heterogeneous both politically and racially as ours reaches approximate agreement on the major issues before it, its proposals must obviously carry great weight both with Parliament and the peoples of India, whereas if we show ourselves at this stage to be seriously at variance on a multitude of points, it is possible that the introduction of the new constitution which India has so long awaited and which will confer upon her some degree of self-determination, may be seriously delayed. This statement, therefore, should be read as a qualifying note and not as an indication of general dissent.

J. MILNER.

30th April, 1932.

MINUTE BY MRS. P. SUBBARAYAN.

I much regret that I cannot entirely agree with the recommendations made by the majority of my colleagues. I consider it necessary that I should state my views more fully, because I feel very strongly on certain matters which are of great importance to the vital interests of the country. The main points on which I wish to express my opinion are :—

Adult franchise.

I realise the difficulties in the way of the immediate introduction of adult franchise throughout the country, but I also feel, as do some of my colleagues, that a beginning can be made in those areas where these difficulties would be most easily overcome. I would therefore recommend adult franchise in all capital cities and large towns which will form urban constituencies with representatives of their own. It must be admitted that the standard of political consciousness and education is undoubtedly higher in cities than in villages and this fact justifies the discrimination proposed, and it will create a healthy spirit of emulation.

Women's franchise and representation.

(a) Franchise.—The Committee has pointed out the importance of increasing the voting strength of women and of securing their representation on legislatures. Unless some form of special franchise is devised the voting strength of women cannot be appreciably increased to make it an effective factor in election. Any proposal suggested for the special franchise will have some drawback. This matter has been discussed in detail in the Report but I would express my regret that it was not found possible to increase the number of women electors still more. The greatest difficulty standing in the way, is the administrative, particularly where special arrangements have to be made in polling booths. But in my view that difficulty is not insuperable and more women should be enfranchised. The importance of increasing the number of women electors will be greater if there is no special provision to secure at least their minimum representation.

(b) Representation.—The women of India who have been doing public work have endeavoured to keep out the communal question from entering their movement, in any form whatever. The evidence we have had from women witnesses shows the earnestness and strength of that desire. At the first Round Table Conference, also, the women delegates with one voice emphasised this view, and urged that any reservation of seats should not be by communities.

Some of the Indian women's organisations even oppose reservation of seats because of their objection to any kind of communal electorates. In fairness to the demand made by women, and in the best interests of the country, any special constituencies that may be formed for them should comprise all voters, men and women, of all classes, castes and creeds residing in the area concerned. Women representatives on the legislatures should be there not as members of particular communities but as representatives of women of all castes and creeds.

Minor minorities and special interests.

While granting that the minor minorities, like other communities, should have some representation, I am strongly of opinion that such representation should be secured by methods which will bring the various classes together and help the growth of unity and nationhood in this country.

With regard to the representation of special interests I am not convinced that there is any necessity for such representation. I have no doubt whatever that the interests concerned will find adequate representation through the general constituencies. Special representation will tend to perpetuate the already prevalent class differences and such differences will be intensified if these interests are subdivided into distinctions of race, caste or community.

Depressed classes.

The problem of the depressed classes requires to be examined still more carefully and in greater detail than I have been able to do now, for want of time. Untouchability is steadily diminishing due to education and the work of public spirited reformers. It is important, therefore, that any form of representation should avoid these classes from becoming a separate and distinct element of the population in the future. I am in favour of these classes having representation, but this could be secured by methods which will accelerate the absorption into the mass of the population rather than separation.

It is of great importance also that there should be an adequate number of women electors from the depressed classes. The vote will raise their status in every way and progress will be more effectively and speedily achieved if the men and women have equal opportunities from the outset. The mistake made in other communities, by allowing one-sided progress only, amongst men, should be avoided.

Federal Legislatures.

The Prime Minister's letter says that " it is clearly necessary to widen the electorate so that the legislatures to which responsibility is to be entrusted should be representative of the general mass of the population ".

I consider that the arguments in support of a wide extension of franchise for provincial councils hold good in the case of the federal legislature also, under a system of responsible government. The proposals made by my colleagues do not provide in my view for an adequate representation of the people of the country. I would therefore suggest that the franchise for the federal lower house be the same as for the provincial councils. This will make the assembly representative at least of 14·2 per cent. of the population of 270 millions. The electorate will not be too large in practice as the constituencies will be smaller in size than they are now, owing to the number of seats being increased. The difficulties of canvassing in a vast country like India are governed more by the area of the constituency than by the members within that area.

It has also been said that the electorate for the Assembly will be required to deal with problems remote from the experience and knowledge of the village voter. But I would point out that it is not in consonance with the spirit of responsible government if the vote is withheld from any person on the assumption that he or she is not directly affected by the actions of the legislature. Experience has shown that even the possibility of an increase in the duty on necessities of life, like salt or kerosene, has roused the people.

It is more than likely that when there is provincial autonomy the eye of the elector is liable to be concentrated on the provinces more than on the whole country and this will promote a narrow spirit of provincialism and add to the separatist tendencies already prevalent in this country and hamper the growth of national unity.

The advantage of having the same franchise for the provincial and central legislatures is, that it gives the voter political education with regard to provincial and national issues at the same time. The elector is also enabled to have a personal and direct touch with the deliberations of the Central Government which strengthens his sense of responsibility. The federal legislature, as is rightly stated in the Report, " is to be the body through which the national spirit and aspirations will express themselves and accomplish their ends ". Political education of the mass of people on this matter is as, or even more, important than on merely provincial matters.

Another point for consideration is that with increasing political consciousness of the people and the extended franchise for provincial legislatures, there will be legitimate ground for popular discontent if the central legislature is not fairly representative. It is vital that every effort should be made to avoid any such feeling during the formative period of the new constitution.

I have felt it desirable to express my views on these particular points because of their importance, but I am not at variance with my colleagues with regard to the Report as a whole.

The work which the Committee has done may in some respects be incomplete owing partly to the fact that the communal question is not yet settled, and partly to the rapidity with which we have had to complete our task. At the same time, considering the circumstances, and the complexity of our subject, we have worked in an admirably harmonious spirit, and I hope and believe that the results of our labours will be to the benefit of my country.

(Mrs.) P. SUBBARAYAN.

1*st May*, 1932.

NOTE ON THE DEPRESSED CLASSES.

By Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, M.L.C.

I.—General.

1. I have agreed to confine the term depressed classes to untouchables only. In fact, I have myself sought to exclude from the untouchables all those in whom there cannot be the same consciousness of kind as is shared by those who suffer from the social discrimination that is inherent in the system of untouchability and who are, therefore, likely to exploit the untouchables for their own purposes. I have also raised no objection to the utilisation of tests 7 and 8 referred to in the Committee's Report for the ascertainment of the untouchable classes. But as I find that different persons seek to apply them in different ways or put different constructions on them I feel it necessary to explain my point of view in regard to this matter.

2. In the first place it is urged in some quarters that whatever tests are applied for ascertaining the untouchable classes they must be applied uniformly all over India. In this connection, I desire to point out that in a matter of this sort it would hardly be appropriate to apply the same test or tests all over India. India is not a single homogeneous country. It is a continent. The various provinces are marked by extreme diversity of conditions and there is no tie of race or language. Owing to absence of communication each province has evolved along its own lines with its own peculiar manners and modes of social life. In such circumstances the degree of uniformity with which most of the tests of untouchability are found to apply all over India is indeed remarkable. For instance, bar against temple entry exists everywhere in India. Even the tests of well-water and pollution by touch apply in every province, although not with the same rigidity everywhere. But to insist on absolute uniformity in a system like that of untouchability, which, after all, is a matter of social behaviour and which must therefore vary with the circumstances of each province and also of each individual is simply to trifle with the problem. The Statutory Commission was quite alive to this possible line of argument and after careful consideration rejected it by recognising the principle of diversity in the application of tests of untouchability. On page 67 of vol. II., which contains its recommendations, it observed " It will plainly be necessary, after the main principles of the new system of representation have been settled, to entrust to some specially appointed body (like the former Franchise Committee) the task of drawing up fresh electoral rules to carry these principles into effect, *and one of the tasks of such a body will be to frame for each province a definition of ' depressed classes ' (which may well vary, sometimes even between parts of the same province)*, and to determine their numbers as so defined." Another point which I wish to emphasise is the

futility of insisting upon the application of uniform tests of untouchability all over India. *It is a fundamental mistake to suppose that differences in tests of untouchability indicate differences in the conditions of the untouchables.* On a correct analysis of the mental attitude they indicate it will be found that whether the test is causing pollution by touch or refusal to use the common well, the notion underlying both is one and the same. Both are outward registers of the same inward feeling of defilement, odium, aversion and contempt. Why will not a Hindu touch an untouchable ? Why will not a Hindu allow an untouchable to enter the temple or use the village well ? Why will not a Hindu admit an untouchable in the inn ? The answer to each one of these questions is the same. It is that the untouchable is an unclean person not fit for social intercourse. Again, why will not a Brahmin priest officiate at religious ceremonies performed by an untouchable ? Why will not a barber serve an untouchable ? In these cases also the answer is the same. It is that it is below dignity to do so. If our aim is to demarcate the class of people who suffer from social odium then it matters very little which test we apply. For, as I have pointed out, each of these tests is indicative of the same social attitude on the part of the touchables towards the untouchables.

3. In the second place the view is put forth that in applying the test of " causing pollution by touch " for ascertaining the untouchable classes effect must be given to it in its *literal sense*—and not in its *notional sense.* In the literal sense untouchables are only those persons whose touch not only causes pollution and is therefore avoided or if not avoided is washed off by purification. In the notional sense an untouchable is a person who is deemed to belong to a class which is commonly held to cause pollution by touch although contact with such a person may for local circumstances not be avoided or may not necessitate ceremonial purification. According to those who seek to apply the test in its literal sense the conclusion would be the so-called untouchables should cease to be reckoned as untouchables wherever conditions have so changed that people do not avoid the touch of an untouchable or do not trouble to purify themselves of the pollution caused by their touch. I cannot accept this view which, in my opinion, is based on a misconception. An individual may not be treated as an untouchable in the literal sense of the term on account of various circumstances. None the less, outside the scope of such compelling circumstances, he does continue to be regarded as an impure person by reason of his belonging to the untouchable class. This distinction is well brought out by the Census Superintendent of Bihar and Orissa in his Census Report of 1921, from which the following is an extract. Speaking of the relaxation of caste rules, he says : " Such incidents, however, which we have only noticed amongst the upper and more educated castes that are aspiring to the upper ranks, are to be regarded not as signs portending the collapse of the caste system, but of its adjustment to

modern conditions. The same may be said with regard to modifications of the rules about personal contact or the touching of what is eaten or drunk. . . . In places like Jamshedpur, where work is done under modern conditions, men of all castes and races work side by side in the mill without any misgivings regarding the caste of their neighbours. But because the facts of everyday life make it impossible to follow the same practical rules as were followed a hundred years ago, it is not to be supposed that the distinctions of pure and impure, touchable and untouchable, are no longer observed. A high caste Hindu will not allow an 'untouchable' to sit on the same seat, to smoke the same hookah, or to touch his person, his seat, his food or the water that he drinks." *If this is a correct statement of the facts of life then the difference between untouchability in its literal and notional sense is a distinction which makes no difference to the ultimate situation; for as the extract shows, untouchability in its notional sense persists even where untouchability in its literal sense has ceased to obtain.* This is why I insist that the test of untouchability must be applied in its notional sense.

4. In the third place the idea is broadcast that untouchability is rapidly vanishing. I wish to utter a word of caution against the acceptance of this view and to point out the necessity of distinguishing facts from propaganda. In my opinion, what is important to be borne in mind in drawing inference from instances showing the occasional commingling of Brahmins and non-Brahmins, touchables and untouchables, is that the system of caste and the system of untouchability form really the steel frame of Hindu society. This division cannot easily be wiped out for the simple reason that it is not based upon rational, economic or racial grounds. On the other hand, the chances are that untouchability will endure far longer into the future than the optimist reformer is likely to admit on account of the fact that it is based on religious dogma. What makes it so difficult to break the system of untouchability is the religious sanction which it has behind it. At any rate the ordinary Hindu looks upon it as part of his religion and there is no doubt that, in adopting towards untouchables what is deemed to be an inhuman way of behaviour, he does so more from the sense of observing his religion than from any motive of deliberate cruelty. Based on religion the ordinary Hindu only relaxes the rules of untouchability where he cannot observe them. He never abandons them. For abandonment of untouchability to him involves a total abandonment of the basic religious tenets of Hinduism as understood by him and the mass of Hindus. Based on religion untouchability will persist as all religious notions have done. Indian history records the attempts of many a Mahatma to uproot untouchability from the Indian soil. They include such great men as Budha, Ramanuja and the Vaishnava saints of modern times. It would be hazardous to assume that a system which has withstood all this onslaught will

collapse. The Hindu looks upon the observance of untouchability as an act of religious merit and non-observance of it as sin. My view therefore, is that so long as this notion prevails untouchability will prevail.

Having explained my views on general questions regarding interpretations and connotations of the system of untouchability I proceed to offer some remarks on the question of the population of depressed classes in the three provinces in which there is no unanimity of opinion.

II.—Depressed classes in United Provinces.

5. Regarding the population of the depressed classes in the United Provinces five different estimates have been given to the Committee :—

(1) Estimate of the United Provinces Provincial Franchise Committee.

(2) Estimate given by Mr. Blunt in his Note.

(3) Estimate given by the Census Commissioner.

(4) Two estimates given by the Government of the United Provinces.

I make the following observations on these estimates.

6. I agree that Mr. Blunt's Note carries great authority with it. It is based on the facts which came into his possession as a Census Superintendent for United Provinces in 1911. It has the added weight of the opinion of an informal committee of non-official Hindus which I am told was appointed by the United Provinces Government to examine the correctness of the lists of untouchable castes in United Provinces drawn up by Mr. Blunt in his first draft. All the same I differ from Mr. Blunt in the following particulars :—

(i) One is that Mr. Blunt has divided the three following single communities into two dichotomous sections, one touchable and the other untouchable.

	Touchable.	*Untouchables.*
(1) Bhoksa group ..	30,000	19,028
(2) Kori group ..	154,867	775,839
(3) Chamar group ..	2,000,000	4,187,770

(ii) The second point of difference is that he treats the Arakh group whose population is 110,032 as touchable when as a matter of fact that group forms a part of the Pasi community which is undoubtedly an untouchable community.

My contention is that the procedure adopted by Mr. Blunt is not in accordance with facts and is not warranted by the fundamental theory of Hindu social life. That the Kori group is simply a part of the Chamar group and as such is wholly an untouchable group is

borne out by the views of Mr. Blunt himself as expressed by him in the Report of the United Provinces Census of 1911, of which he was the Superintendent. I rely on the remarks made by him in paragraph 347 of the Census Report of 1911, where he has discussed the connection of the Kori to the Chamar. On page 368 of the same Report he makes the following observations :—

> " The relation between Kori and Chamar has already been referred to above (paragraph 347). In Gorakhpur it appears to be closer still and it is said that there are no Koris there save Kori Chamars. The Kori Chamar, however, drops the Chamar and tries to pass himself off as a Kori pure and simple or even by slurring the word to make it sound like Koiri. A Khalasi in Gorakhpur district was severely beaten by the rest of his Hindu fellow-servants for playing this trick and making them take water from his hands."

Regarding the Arakh group, Mr. Blunt himself admits in his Note (page 15) that " as a whole these castes appear to be offshoots of the important Pasi tribe " which he has treated as untouchable. Coming to the Chamar group Mr. Blunt's reasons for excluding 2 million Chamars from the category of untouchables are given by him on page 17 of his note. He says : " On the other hand, many Chamars have taken to cleaner occupations such as those of saddler (Zingar), cobbler (Moochi), groom (Syce), while the extension of the leather trade at Cawnpore and elsewhere has enabled many Chamars to become wealthy, when they aim at social status much higher than that of their village brethren. Such Chamars are generally regarded as touchables and many change the caste name for something less ill-sounding, for instance, Koril, Aharwar, Jatiya, Dhusiya and especially Jaiswar." In my opinion to exclude, as Mr. Blunt has done, such Chamars as have taken to cleaner occupations or have become wealthy from the category of untouchables is a totally erroneous view. One of the characteristics of the system of untouchability and also of the caste system is that the social status of the individual rises or falls with that of the community to which he belongs. Once an untouchable, always an untouchable has been the rule of Hindu social life. This is its cardinal feature, and it is this which distinguishes it from the class system in which the social status of the individual rises or falls not with that of the community to which he belongs but with his own personal merits and demerits. Having regard to this fundamental and basic principle of Hindu social life, the division made by Mr. Blunt that some members of an admittedly untouchable caste are touchable must be discarded. Indeed, it is a contradiction in terms and does not seem to be in accord with the facts. It is not true that sections of the Chamar caste mentioned by Mr. Blunt have been treated as touchable or allowed to enter temples or draw water from public wells. On the contrary, they have invented, according to Mr. Blunt's own

statement, new names for themselves to avoid being treated as untouchable. Mr. Blunt himself gives instances of this in his Census Report for the United Provinces for 1911. I quote the following extract from page 368–369 of Part I. :—

> "A Jaiswar Chamar in the same way will never admit he is a Chamar but tries to pass his caste off as Jaiswar alone, a sub-caste of so many castes including Rajput. A syce once tried the trick on me and in Tundla in Agra District I found a whole colony of Jaiswars who on enquiry proved to be descendants of Chamar regimental syces who had settled there."

If my contentions are accepted and if that part of the population of the untouchable communities which Mr Blunt has treated as touchable is added to the total of untouchables then Mr. Blunt's figures for untouchables in the United Provinces come to 11,476,214.

7. The Census Commissioner's estimate of the population of the depressed classes is 12·6 millions and even if a stricter computation were followed and only " list A" which includes untouchables only was accepted the population of depressed classes so understood would come up to a little over 11 millions—a figure which very nearly agrees with that of Mr. Blunt.

8. The Government of the United Provinces has given two sets of estimates. In its first report it gave the figure of 6,773,814. In its final report it agreed with the Provincial Committee that the population of castes which fell within the definition of causing pollution by touch came to only 459,000. *Regarding the estimate of 6,773,814 given in its first report it is necessary to point out that this estimate is not an estimate of the population of untouchables in the United Provinces.* So far as that point is concerned the Government of the United Provinces seem tacitly to accept the figures given by Mr. Blunt in his Note. *The estimate of 6,773,814 given by the United Provinces Government is an estimate of people who in its opinion require to be recognised for political protection.* The merits of this procedure I have discussed below. All that I wish to do here is to repeat that this estimate of the United Provinces Government is not an estimate of the total population of untouchables as such. The only comment I wish to make on the estimate given by the United Provinces Government in its final report is to place beside it the estimate which it gave to the Simon Commission. In their note on the position of the depressed classes which is printed as an Addendum at the end of their memorandum to the Statutory Commission they said :—" Of the total Hindu population of the Province nearly one-third, i.e., that is almost 13 millions are regarded by orthodox Hindus as untouchables. A list of castes classed as untouchable, extracted from the United Provinces Census Report of 1901, with the population of each is appended to this note. . . . The social impurity attaching to the untouchable castes merely implies that a man of high caste will not take food or water from an untouchable, and *if he touches or comes in*

close contact with such a person he must wash before eating or even before mixing with persons of higher castes." (Italics mine). It is clear from this that on the 16th May, 1928, on which the memorandum was submitted the population of persons who on the basis of untouchability as meaning causing pollution of touch was 13 millions. *It is obvious that the definition given by the Chairman of our Committee is not different from the definition which obtained in United Provinces and which is followed by the Government in 1928 in computing this total of 13 millions.* I must, therefore, leave the United Provinces Government to explain the vast difference between the two estimates. I am, however, constrained to remark that these changes in the estimates of the untouchables in the United Provinces by the United Provinces Government are equalled by the changes in the views of the United Provinces Government regarding the method of representation of the depressed classes. In their despatch on the Report of the Statutory Commission written on 23rd August, 1930, the Government of the United Provinces was the staunchest supporter of separate electorate for the depressed classes. In their first report to our Committee the Government came down to nomination from a panel while in their final report it recommended reservation of seats. It would be a disaster to the cause of the depressed classes if the views of a government were to undergo such strange oscillations in regard to two such momentous issues as the population and representation of the depressed classes.

9. Coming to the estimate given by the United Provinces Provincial Franchise Committee I wish to draw attention to the following facts :—

(i) The figures of the Census Commissioner, of Mr. Blunt and of the Government in 1928, all agree that the depressed class population meaning thereby those who cause pollution by touch is approximately between 11,500,000 and 13,000,000. It is, therefore, for the Committee to justify its surprisingly low estimate.

(ii) I am not at all certain that when the Committee says that the two depressed class members agree in its view the depressed class members and the majority of the Committee were *ad-idem* in respect of all the implications of the agreement. At any rate, I am bound to point out that the opinion of Babu Ram Charan on this issue has no value. He belongs to the depressed class in the sense of the economically poor and educationally backward classes and not to the untouchable classes in the strict sense of the term.

(iii) The Indian Franchise Committee has adopted two tests for the classification of untouchables, temple entry and pollution by touch. The United Provinces Provincial Franchise Committee has proceeded on the basis of only one test, namely, causing pollution by touch and that too in its literal sense and not in its notional sense.

(iv) In adopting our Chairman's definition of untouchability which I must say he gave on his own responsibility the Provincial Franchise Committee does not seem to have adverted to the clause " as it exists in the United Provinces."

10. There is another question of great importance which arises in connection with the method adopted both by Mr. Blunt and the United Provinces Government in estimating the population of the depressed classes. The Indian Franchise Committee has proceeded on the hypothesis that all those who fall under the two tests accepted by it must be treated as untouchables and must be reckoned as such for purposes of special representation. In the course of its investigation the Indian Franchise Committee found that as things stood in India all depressed classes were not untouchables although all untouchables were depressed. Consequently the Committee decided to exclude such depressed classes as were not untouchables, and to include all untouchables irrespective of their economic and educational condition. Mr. Blunt and the Government of the United Provinces seem to make a distinction between " untouchables " and " depressed classes " out of quite a different sort. *According to them all depressed classes are untouchables. All untouchables, however, do not belong to the category of depressed classes. This is just the reverse of the prevalent practice and the conclusions of the Indian Franchise Committee.* The question is not one of mere nomenclature. It has far reaching consequences which go to affect the degree of representation. *The United Provinces Government and Mr. Blunt do not take into their calculation all untouchables for the purposes of representation. They take into account only those untouchables who can be called depressed. The Indian Franchise Committee proceeds on the hypothesis that once the class of untouchables is ascertained by the application of the two tests it has accepted for the purpose the whole of the class of untouchables so ascertained must be taken into account for the purpose of representation without any further distinction between rich and poor, advanced and backward, educated and uneducated,* which in my opinion is the correct procedure.

It is hardly necessary for me to say that I do not agree with the procedure adopted by Mr. Blunt and the Government of the United Provinces.

IV.—Depressed classes in the Punjab.

11. In connection with the population figure for the depressed classes given in the census of 1931, I wish to draw attention to two facts.

(1) The population of those who caused pollution by touch was, according to the census of 1911, 2·8 millions, while in the census of 1931 the population of untouchables is given as amounting to 1·3 millions.

(2) The census of 1911 gives a list of 23 castes which are deemed to cause pollution by touch. The census of 1931 mentions only castes as forming the untouchable population in the Punjab.

12. Why the total population of the untouchables and the list of castes included in that category should have shrunk so much between 1911 and 1931 I am not able to ascertain. It is, however, necessary to state that among the untouchables of Punjab there has been going on for some years past a strong movement called the Ad-Dharm movement the object of which is to separate from the Hindu fold and form themselves into a distinct community under the new name of Ad-Dharmis. Such has been the strength of the movement that the untouchables decided to return themselves as Ad-Dharmis instead of Hindus in the census of 1931 and the Government gave recognition to this feeling and allowed the Census Superintendent of Punjab to open a new category of Ad-Dharmis. This led in some parts of the Punjab to riots between the Hindus and the untouchables. As a result the untouchables in some parts returned themselves simply as Ad-Dharmis without mentioning their respective castes and in other parts where they were prevented from doing so returned themselves as Hindus under their caste names. I am mentioning these facts to show that the difficulties created in the enumeration of the untouchables and which are admitted by the Government of Punjab may be responsible for this shrinkage in the number and list of untouchables in the Punjab. The matter therefore requires to be carefully looked into.

V.—Depressed classes in Bengal.

13. In regard to the depressed classes of Bengal there is an important piece of evidence to which I should like to call attention and which goes to show that the list given in the Bengal Census of 1911 is a correct enumeration of castes which have been traditionally treated as untouchable castes in Bengal. I refer to Section 7 of Regulation IV of 1809 (a regulation for rescinding Regulations IV and V of 1806 ; and for substituting Rules in lieu of those enacted in the said regulations for levying duties from the pilgrims resorting to Jagganath, and for the Superintendents and management of the affairs of the Temple ; passed by the Governor-General in Council, on the 28th April, 1809) which gives the following list of castes which were debarred from entering the temple of Jagganath at Puri :—(1) Loli or Kashi, (2) Kalal or Sunri, (3) Machhua, (4) Namasudra or Chandal, (5) Ghuski, (6) Gazur, (7) Bagdi, (8) Jogi or Nurbaf, (9) Kahar-Bauri and Dulia, (10) Rajbansi, (11) Pirali, (12) Chamar, (13) Dom, (14) Pan, (15) Tiyar, (16) Bhuinnali and (17) Hari.

The enumeration agrees with the list of 1911 Census and thus lends support to its correctness. Incidentally it shows that a period of 100 years made no change in the social status of the untouchables of Bengal.

In connection with these three Provinces, United Provinces, Bengal and Punjab, where there is disagreement on the question of the population of the depressed classes I desire to draw attention to the fact that the Indian Franchise Committee has proceeded upon two distinct tests for the ascertainment of the untouchable population, while the Provincial Governments and Provincial Committees have apparently followed one single test, namely, causing pollution by touch.

VI.—Nomenclature.

14. The revision of the Electoral Rules consequent upon the proposed changes in the constitution is a very good occasion for considering the question of having a proper and appropriate nomenclature for the depressed classes. I therefore propose to express my opinion on this question. There is considerable objection on the part of the communities which are now called " depressed classes " to the use of that term in describing them. Several witnesses who have appeared before the Committee have given expression to this sentiment. Besides the term " depressed classes " has led to a great deal of confusion in the census because it includes others who are not strictly untouchables. Secondly, it gives the impression that the depressed classes are a low and helpless community, when as a matter of fact in every province numbers of them are both well-to-do and well-educated and the whole community is acquiring consciousness of its needs, is charged with ambition for securing a respectable status in Indian society and is making stupendous efforts to achieve it. On all these grounds the term " depressed classes " is inappropriate and unsuitable. Mr. Mullan, the Census Superintendent of Assam, has brought into use a new term called " exterior castes " to cover the untouchables. This designation has many advantages. It defines exactly the position of the untouchables who are within the Hindu religion but outside the Hindu society and distinguishes it from Hindus who are economically and educationally depressed but who are both within the pale of Hindu religion and Hindu society. The term has two other advantages. It avoids all the confusion that is now caused by use of the vague term " depressed classes " and at the same time is not offensive. Our Committee did not feel competent to make recommendation in this behalf. But as a representative of the depressed classes I have no hesitation in saying that until better nomenclature is found the untouchable classes should hereafter be described by the more expressive term " exterior castes " or " excluded castes " and not as " depressed classes."

VII.—Reservations.

15. Before concluding this Note I would like on my part to make the same reservation which my Muslim colleagues on the Committee have made, namely, that the allocation of seats to labour, women, and other special interests must not affect the proportion of seats which the depressed classes have claimed in the Minorities Pact submitted to the Round Table Conference.

B. R. AMBEDKAR.

1st May, 1932.

MINUTE OF DISSENT BY MR. S. B. TAMBE, MR. C. Y. CHINTAMANI, M.L.C., AND MR. R. R. BAKHALE, M.L.C.

April 30, 1932.

To

The Chairman,
Indian Franchise Committee.

SIR,

We submit herewith the Minute of Dissent, subject to which we shall sign the Report of the Committee.

2. As the discussion of the Report is not complete, we shall, if necessary, submit an addendum * to the Minute on points to be decided, if we shall find ourselves unable to agree with any of the decisions.

We are,
SIR,
Your obedient servants,
(Sd.) S. B. TAMBE.
C. Y. CHINTAMANI.
R. R. BAKHALE.

While we agree with much in the Report, we regret that there are important parts where we are not able to see with our colleagues eye to eye, and it is necessary from our point of view that we should state our conclusions as well as the reasons therefor.

Adult Franchise.

(CHAPTER II. OF THE REPORT.)

2. We are glad that our colleagues fully appreciate the value of adult franchise. But we are inclined to think that the administrative difficulties which preclude its immediate introduction have been unduly emphasised. We are convinced, however, not only that a beginning can be made, but that it should be made in selected areas where it is feasible. Not only do we think that this is a measure of justice, but it will be of great value in familiarising both administrative officers and the people with the system, thereby facilitating its early extension over larger areas. Besides, the measure we recommend will result in a substantial increase of electors belonging to the labouring and the depressed classes. The United Provinces Franchise Committee have recommended adult suffrage in all cities with a population of 50,000 or more. Our recommendation is still more modest. It is that adult suffrage should be introduced in all cities which have a population of 100,000 or more. Their number

* An addendum subsequently submitted by the signatories of this Minute has been incorporated as paragraph 4-A. of the Minute.

is not more than 30* in the whole country. If it be thought that even this would be an excessive beginning, we shall be content if adult suffrage is introduced in the first instance in all capital cities, namely, Delhi, Madras, Bombay, Calcutta, Allahabad, Lahore, Patna, Nagpur, Shillong and Peshawar. The possible objection that this step will increase the urban electorate at the expense of the rural is more academic than real. The fact cannot be questioned that there is more of education and capacity for affairs in cities than in villages, and the aim of the reformer should be to level up the latter and not level down the former. Compulsory primary education was first introduced in municipalities and has been gradually extended to rural areas. We need hardly say that these cities will be separate constituencies, as most of them are even at present, and will not be merged in rural constituencies, and therefore the proportion of urban and rural voters in constituencies comprising both urban and rural areas will not be affected.

3. We are further of opinion that statutory provision should be made for an increase of the electorate after every ten years, so as to lead to adult franchise throughout the country in a period not exceeding thirty years. The rate of advance may differ in the several provinces according as local opinion and local conditions may suggest, but the goal should be reached everywhere in the space of a generation. In the absence of some such provision, adult franchise may remain a far off adorable dream. We are not content to repeat the proposal of the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference that there should be a review of the position, as we are anxious to avoid the necessity and reduce the probability of convulsive agitations at pretty frequent intervals to induce the Government and the legislature of the day to satisfy a just popular demand. The present Government of India Act provided for an examination of the position with reference to responsible government ten years after it came into force. The agitation that marked the appointment and enquiry of the Simon Commission reinforces our argument, and conveys a warning that should not go unheeded. Objection has been raised against the time limit which we propose. Our answer is that experience bids us beware that in the absence of a statutory time limit progress in the desired direction tends to be far slower. A statutory provision such as is here recommended will have the further beneficial effect of accelerating the wider diffusion of education among the masses as governments and legislatures will both realise its urgency.

* Madras, Madura, Trichinopoly, Salem (four in the Madras Presidency); Bombay, Ahmedabad, Karachi, Poona, Sholapur (five in the Bombay Presidency); Calcutta, Howrah, Dacca (three in Bengal); Lucknow, Cawnpore, Agra, Benares, Allahabad, Bareilly, Meerut, Moradabad (eight in the United Provinces); Lahore, Amritsar, Multan and Rawalpindi (four in the Punjab); Patna (one in Bihar and Orissa); Nagpur and Jubbulpur (two in the Central Provinces and Berar); Peshawar (one in the North-West Frontier Province); Delhi and Ajmer.

The basis of the Franchise.

(CHAPTER VI OF THE REPORT.)

4. In paragraph 68 of the Report it is stated that property has been taken as the main foundation of the franchise and that the property qualification has been lowered " so as to bring on to the roll the great bulk of the landholders, the tenants and the urban rent-payers and a considerable section of other poorer classes." The omission here of wage-earners will be noticed. Yet, following the recommendation in this behalf of the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference, the questionnaire issued by our own Committee invited witnesses to understand the term " property " " in its widest sense as including . . . . wages, whether in cash or kind." The consideration given to the subject of labour representation and the special recommendations in behalf of the depressed classes do not make up for the omission to recognise wages as one of the general qualifications for franchise. The numbers affected are vast. Including agricultural and non-agricultural labour, the total in the nine Governors' provinces is no less than 48,755,382 out of an aggregate population of 254,955,473. That is, about 20 per cent. of the whole.* In some provinces " agricultural labourers " are actually more in number than " tenants "; for example, in Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and the Central Provinces.† Those who are not adults being left out, the numbers affected are still very large. Almost every local Government and Provincial Committee have admitted that their proposals for the extension of the franchise leave out very large numbers of these, the poorest of people. This has been sought to be justified on the two grounds that there are practical difficulties and that many of those labourers are themselves tenants or sub-tenants and will, therefore, come in under those categories. We do not know to what extent the two are mixed up in the separate columns of tenants and labourers, but we cannot think that more than a small fraction of the large numbers of agricultural labourers are also tenants. As regards practical difficulties, they do not exist in the case of organised occupations while they are far from being insurmountable in respect of others. Besides, a wage census is both practicable and desirable. In our opinion, every labourer, rural or urban, who has been in receipt of wages of

* These figures are taken from the occupational statistics prepared by the Joint Secretaries of our Committee from the census figures of 1931.

† Corresponding reference.

Rs. 10 a month or its equivalent in kind continuously for the six months preceding the preparation of the electoral roll should be brought on the register.

——	Madras.		Bombay.		Bengal.		Central Provinces.	
	No.	Percentage of the total population.	No.	Percentage of the total population.	No.	Percentage of the total population.	No.	Percentage of the total population.
Tenants ..	1,617,476	3·4	1,160,432	5·3	815,654	1·6	121,373	·7
Agricultural labourers.	5,064,459	10·8	2,967,809	13·6	2,668,343	5·3	3,455,625	22·2

4A. In paragraph 79 of the Report it is stated that if after the preparation of an electoral roll on the basis of the new franchise it is discovered that the ratio of voters to population is markedly different as between one community and another, " it will be necessary to consider what action if any is required in order to rectify the disparity ". We do not approve of any such action. It should be noted that the principal recommendation of the Franchise sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference was " that in any given area the Franchise qualifications should be the same for all communities ". They were not the same during the year of the Morley-Minto Act and much heart-burning was the consequence. On this account differentiation was done away with in the rules made in 1920 and it does not exist now. To re-introduce it anywhere and on any plea—except in the very special case of the depressed classes—would be a retrograde and objectionable step which would create a fresh source of inter-communal friction. Opinions of provincial governments and committees as well as the bulk of the evidence of associations and individuals are decisively against any such differential franchises. And we must record our conviction that any such measure would be utterly unwise.

Provincial franchise schemes.

(CHAPTER VII OF THE REPORT.)

5. *House Rent Qualification.*—In paragraph 85 it is stated that " we are prescribing rental qualifications in towns which should bring in a considerable section of the labouring classes." While we approve of the recommendation, we may point out that in large industrial towns like Bombay, where rents are comparatively high, the practice of sub-letting generally prevails. We, therefore, recommend that the sub-tenants or boarders who pay the minimum rent that may be prescribed for becoming a voter, should be enfranchised.

6. *Bombay.*—We recommend that the land revenue qualification in the case of men should be further reduced from Rs. 8 to Rs. 6. This would only increase the electorate by 400,000, and we are satisfied that this cannot be ruled out on administrative grounds. We further recommend that the house rent qualification in the city of Bombay should be brought down from Rs. 60 to Rs. 36.

7. *The United Provinces.*—We support the proposal of the United Provinces Franchise Committee that the franchise should be extended to " members of joint families who hold the minimum qualification, provided their names are recorded in the village papers." A similar proposal made by the Government of Madras in favour of " a registered joint landholder, inamdar, *pattadar* or occupancy ryot " has been accepted by our colleagues. The case of members of joint families is almost on all fours with that of joint landholders. As regards the objection of the Government of the United Provinces, it is met by the proviso that the names of such members of joint families must be recorded in the village papers in order to entitle them to the vote.

8. *The Punjab.*—While we are glad that the hard case of members of non-agricultural tribes in the Punjab has received consideration, we would make the definite recommendation that all payers of *haisiyat* tax should be given the vote, and further that the feasibility of extending the vote to persons with incomes lower than Rs. 400 should also be considered.

9. *Assam.*—We recommend that the proposal of the Provincial Franchise Committee to enfranchise 15 per cent. of the total population " by reduction of the qualifying amount of payment of land revenue or of *chowkidari* tax " be accepted. Our colleagues say (paragraph 198) that " in view of the administrative difficulties which are forcibly pointed out in the local Government's report, we are not prepared to press them to provide for more than 10 per

cent. of the population, which involves trebling of the existing electorate." In several other provinces recommendations have been made which involve a similar consequence, and we do not think that this circumstance alone need have deterred a more favourable consideration of the proposal of the Assam Committee. As regards administrative difficulties, let it be borne in mind that the composition of the Committee, which had for Chairman a British representative of the planting industry and which included three British members of the Indian Civil Service and eight members of the Legislative Council, should lead to the presumption that they would not have put forward a proposal which was administratively impossible.

Women's Representation.

(CHAPTER VIII OF THE REPORT.)

10. We deem it our duty to give prominence to the important fact that there was a strong and an almost unanimous expression of opinion by women witnesses, whether they appeared as the representatives of women's associations or in their individual capacity, that they did not want women representatives in the legislatures to be elected by any communal electorates. Their objection to be dragged into communal controversies in any manner was emphatic, convincing, and if we may add, most welcome. We are equally clear and strong that if, unfortunately, communal electorates and communal representation be not done away with altogether, at the least there should be no extension to the sphere of women's activities of what we consider to be an essentially wrong principle. And there is not even a semblance of justification for it in the face of the decided opinion of women witnesses to which we have referred.

Depressed Classes.

(CHAPTER X.)

11. We now come to a question of great importance and of great perplexity—the question of depressed classes. This question has received as much attention as, if not more than, that of the basis of franchise. We unanimously agreed at our meeting of 4th February, 1932, at Delhi, that the term " depressed classes " should be defined to mean untouchables only. Yet curiously, as we notice, this definition was not clearly kept in mind in drawing up the revised questionnaire, which was issued on 11th February, 1932. One of the questions in the questionnaire was : " What communities would you include as belonging to depressed classes ? Would you include classes other than untouchables, and, if so, which ? " We think that the great confusion caused in the minds of the provincial committees and local Governments must have been due to a large extent to this question. The result is the various figures given by some of the committees and local Governments. The United Provinces Franchise Committee asked our Chairman, when the Committee went to Lucknow for the second time, to define what our Committee meant by the expression " depressed classes." That the several local Governments had no clear idea as to what our Committee wanted, is evident from their provisional replies. It is doubtful if the Governments of Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces had any clear idea of our definition of the term " depressed classes." The Madras Government had for purposes of their own local Act to define the term " depressed classes," and the figures which they have given are not necessarily the total population of those who should form the depressed classes according to our definition. Similar is the case with Bombay. The Bombay Government had appointed a committee long before our Committee defined the term " depressed classes," to investigate and report on certain matters concerning what they called the depressed classes. The figures furnished by the Governments of Madras and Bombay have not been examined in the light of our Committee's definition of the term, but their correctness has not been questioned. As regards the figure given by the Government of the Central Provinces, we do not agree with our colleagues that the classes which are listed as untouchables, not throughout the whole province but in certain districts, should be treated in those districts as belonging to depressed classes. This is unsound in principle and unsafe in practice. It will, besides, cause much inconvenience in the preparation of a roll if separate electorates be ordered for the depressed classes. It is more than likely that more districts than one will have to be included in one constituency. The electoral roll will then include eligible persons of the same class so far as one district is concerned, while it will exclude such persons of that very class in another district. In one constituency there will be a distinction, and if the proposal of

additional or differential qualification to augment the number of depressed class voters be accepted, there will be different qualifications for the same class in the same constituency. We, therefore, think that classes which are listed as untouchables in only a part of a province should not be treated as such for electoral purposes.

12. Regarding the figure for Bihar and Orissa, we regret we cannot agree with our colleagues. The list of depressed classes " in Bihar and Orissa during the census of 1931 " attached to the Chief Secretary's note differs from the list classed as depressed in the same province during the census of 1931 circulated with N.-220-Bihar and Orissa. The first list contains 31 classes while the second only 22. Out of these 22, eight are aboriginal classes according to the statement in Appendix 2 of the Memorandum of the Provincial Franchise Committee. The Chief Secretary in his note at page 10 on the classes Dom, Halalkar and Hari says :—" They are probably the only castes which are regarded as causing pollution ". With regard to the class Dusadh, the Chief Secretary says :—" They would hardly admit that they are a depressed class except when it is a question of government appointment. The problem of the representation of a caste such as this is really the problem of the representation of the agricultural labourers ". In the beginning of his note he says :—" The problem of the depressed classes does not exist in an acute form in Bihar and Orissa." The local Government do not give any figure, but refer to the note of the Chief Secretary for information. In the circumstances, we are not prepared to accept the figure of 4,300,000 as the total of depressed class population in Bihar and Orissa. The evidence which we recorded and the evidence contained in the written statements tends to establish that there are very few classes which can be called " depressed ". We think that the three castes mentioned by the Chief Secretary are the only depressed classes. They number 400,000.

13. Coming to the United Provinces, we notice, as remarked above, that the Provincial Franchise Committee were not given a clear lead, as would appear from the proceedings. With the exception of the representatives of the depressed classes, the Committee were from the beginning of opinion that untouchability should be the test. According to this definition, the depressed class population amounted to five to six lakhs. The only classes which, according to the definition of our Committee, would fall under the category of depressed classes in the United Provinces, are three, namely, Bhangis, Doms and Dhanuks, as stated by the Provincial Franchise Committee. The two members of the depressed classes on the Provincial Committee agreed that these were the only three castes which come within our Committee's definition of depressed classes. The number of these castes is 581,000. On the basis of this definition the local Government also have stated that their number is 549,000. There is thus agreement between the depressed class representatives, the Provincial Committee and the local Government, and the matter, in our opinion,

should be concluded here. But a note by Mr. Blunt, which was prepared before our second visit to the United Provinces and before our definition was communicated to the Provincial Committee and the local Government, has been brought in and this has confused the issue. But it is a material circumstance that Mr. Blunt, who is a member of the Government, has not dissented from their reply. The last sentence of paragraph 16 of Mr. Blunt's note shows that the only classes which strictly fall within our definition of depressed classes were Bhangis and Doms. His note, in this light, is not really inconsistent with his subsequent opinion. In our opinion, the discussion of Mr. Blunt's note is irrelevant. The issue raised by the Provincial Committee and the local Government about some other classes as requiring special treatment is outside the scope of the enquiry in connection with the depressed classes. It opens a very large question and is outside the terms of reference to this Committee.

14. We have not received any final figures from the Bengal Government. The figures supplied by them from time to time vary. The majority of the Bengal Provincial Franchise Committee put the number of depressed classes at 70,000. The evidence tends to show that there is very little of untouchability now existing in that province. The classes which were at one time considered to be depressed have advanced educationally and economically, and have been able to send representatives to the local legislature in every election held since the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. The local Government have stated that in seven districts at least the electors from those classes will form a majority in the electoral roll and it is, in our opinion, not necessary to make any further enquiry into the numbers. Except for the contention of representatives of the depressed classes, opinion is practically unanimous that the problem of depressed class representation scarcely exists in Bengal.

15. As in Bengal, the opinion expressed by all except the representatives of the depressed classes is unanimous that the problem of the representation of the depressed classes does not exist in the Punjab. Both Sikhs and Muslims have been active in converting the lower classes of the Hindu community to their faiths, and their number has accordingly gone down considerably. The evidence tends to show that the only class which is untouchable is that of scavengers. Even members of this class who do not actually do the work of scavenging are not considered untouchable, according to the evidence. The local Government have put the total population of the depressed classes at about 1,300,000. This includes the class called Ramdasiyas, who are Sikhs. It also includes a class called Ad-dharmis, who have vehemently urged that they are not Hindus. This class, we think, should be excluded from the untouchables, as our enquiry has been confined to untouchables in the Hindu community. There is evidence before us that there are untouchables amongst Muslims, Indian

Christians and Sikhs. If Ad-dharmis are to be included amongst untouchables, the scope of our enquiry will have to be widened, so as to cover the untouchables of non-Hindu communities as well.

16. Our estimate of the numbers of the depressed classes in the several provinces is as under :—

	Millions.
Madras	7·1
Bombay	1·7
Bengal	·07
United Provinces	·6
Punjab	1·0
Bihar and Orissa	·4
Central Provinces	2·9
Assam	·65
Total ..	14·42

What His Majesty's Government would want to know at this stage, if the question of depressed classes be considered to be a part of what is called the communal question—with all due deference to the Prime Minister, we do not think it is so—is

(1) In what provinces the depressed classes form a distinct and separable element in the population ;

(2) the extent to which the depressed classes would be likely, through such general extension of the franchise as we may recommend, to secure the right of vote in ordinary electorates ;

(3) public opinion and the Committee's views as to whether special representation is necessary and, if so, the nature thereof.

17. The main report and our statement above will show that in only three provinces, Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces, can the depressed classes be said to form a distinct and separate element of the population. In other provinces it is generally difficult to draw the line. Untouchability in the latter provinces is the adjunct not of a person but of the occupation he pursues. A person belonging to a sweeper class is untouchable if he does scavenging work, but not if he pursues a clean profession. The Governments and provincial committees, except in Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces, have stated that the problem of depressed classes is not acute. No doubt the representatives of the depressed classes have urged that it does exist, but they could not have stated otherwise—the poison of separatism has been spreading. Besides, a person who is appointed to represent a special interest thinks he will be considered to have failed in his duty if he does not make the most extreme demand. Such statements cannot be taken at their face value. Untouchability is steadily diminishing and anyone

who wishes Indians to unite and become one people and nation would not wish that the untouchable classes should be treated as a distinct and separable element of the population. Efforts are being made to remove the barrier dividing class from class where it unfortunately exists and are showing signs of success.

18. We who are decidedly against any representation of castes or classes cannot think of lending our support to any suggestion which, instead of doing away with existing class representation, will create one more class. Even in provinces where the depressed classes form a distinct and separable element, no steps should be taken which will perpetuate their distinction and separation. On the other hand, we strongly recommend that such steps should be taken in the case of their representation as will gradually remove the distinction and separation. In the case of the Central Provinces, we may bring to the notice of His Majesty's Government that there is an agreement as to the nature of representation between representatives of the depressed classes and other Hindus. The statement at page 6 of the Provincial Franchise Committee's provisional reply dated 3rd March, 1932, that Mr. Gavai (representative of the depressed classes) has written a minute of dissent pressing for separate electorates and 22 seats* is not correct. The minute of dissent attached to the reply nowhere refers to a claim for separate electorates. What Mr. Gavai says is : " Besides the reservation of seats on a population basis, the depressed classes should have a right to contest additional seats in the general election." This is certainly not a claim for separate electorates. Mr. Gavai was, besides, examined with Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah at Delhi on 30th March, 1932, and he stated that he was for joint electorates with reservation of seats. There is, therefore, no problem of the depressed classes for settlement by His Majesty's Government in the Central Provinces.

19. We agree that the number of the depressed classes likely to be enfranchised under our proposals will not bear the same proportion to their population as the total number of persons of all classes and castes likely to be enfranchised will bear to the total population. We are no less anxious than our colleagues to devise methods to bring an adequate number of those classes on to the electorate. The extent to which they are likely to be enfranchised under the general scheme of franchise is mentioned in the main Report. But labour has been recommended for special representation, and the bulk of the labourers come from the depressed classes. Special labour constituencies are recommended along with trade unions constituencies, and in the former a good number of the depressed classes, though not as such, will come on the electoral roll. We are, however, in agreement with our colleagues in recommending the special qualifications proposed in the Report for bringing depressed class

* Volume III, Report.

persons on the electoral roll so as to bring up their voting strength as nearly as possible to 10 per cent. But it should be mentioned that we agreed to those proposals on the following distinct conditions, viz., (1) that no separate electorate shall be formed for them, (2) that their representation shall be through joint electorates with or without reservation of seats, and (3) that no class other than that of untouchables shall be included within depressed classes to swell up their number. In Bengal, no additional qualifications for the depressed classes are necessary. They will be brought on the electoral roll in proportion to their number.

20. In answer to the following, viz., " Do you consider that the depressed classes are likely, through such general extension of the franchise as you favour, to secure representatives of their own choice in the general electorates, and if so, to what extent ? If your answer is in the negative, *what specific proposals would you make to secure their representation* in legislatures ? " (our italics), statements were submitted to the Committee by individuals, associations, provincial committees and Governments. Witnesses who appeared before us were examined on their replies to the above question, till after the examination of witnesses of the Bombay Presidency, when the provisional statements of the Central Provinces Committee and Government were discussed with the Central Provinces Committee. The Central Provinces Government recommended joint electorates for depressed classes. The point was then raised that our Committee was not competent under the terms of reference to express any views on the question. Even after this, at Delhi on 30th March, 1932, Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah was cross-examined at some length on the point whether the resolution of the All-India Depressed Classes in favour of joint electorates was really adopted at a properly convened meeting. Indeed, there is a large volume of evidence, oral as well as written, which expresses the public opinion on the question.

(*Mr. Bakhale does not agree with all that is said in this section.*)

Minor minorities.

(CHAPTER XI. OF THE REPORT.)

21. It has been a great impediment during our enquiry that while what is called the communal question has been declared to be beyond the scope of our Committee, we yet were expected to deal with questions affecting the representation of communities as such. In the discussion of the position of what have been called " minor minorities," this difficulty was felt to such an extent that it became a matter of serious consideration, whether the Committee should not postpone their deliberations on questions other than the extension of the franchise and qualifications of franchise, until after His Majesty's Government had decided the questions of communal and minority representation.

22. We regret we cannot endorse all that is said in the Report on the representation of the so-called " minor minorities." If the electorate is satisfied with the policy and the opinions of candidates, to whichever community they may belong, there is no reason to think, as the majority of our colleagues say, that Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians cannot " expect to secure representation in the provincial legislatures through the general constituencies." This statement is not wholly correct as there have been examples of the election of candidates belonging to those communities when they inspired confidence in the electorates. Actually one Indian Christian gentleman returned by the general electorate was appointed a Minister in Bihar, as a British official member of the Provincial Franchise Committee brought out during our sittings at Patna. Yet the Report says that, except in parts of Madras, Indian Christians could not secure representation. Provincial Governments and committees have not been unanimous that these three communities should be accorded special representation in the new constitution. The Government of the United Provinces have made no recommendation whatever, while neither the Government nor the Franchise Committee of the Punjab have proposed any special representation in the case of Anglo-Indians. The Governments of Bihar and Orissa and the Central Provinces have not proposed any special representation in the case of Indian Christians, while the latter have urged a combined electorate for Europeans and Anglo-Indians. The Central Provinces Committee have made no proposals whatever with regard to Europeans, while the Assam Government have made none with regard to Anglo-Indians. As regards representation of Europeans in Bombay, the reports of the local Government and the Provincial Committee " are not very clear on the point." When we turn to the general body of evidence, we think we can affirm with confidence that its weight and tendency is against the continued

fragmentation of the electorate into so many sections. Indian Christians in particular are very far from being unanimous as to the method by which their representation is to be secured. Unquestionably, the three communities named should secure representation in the new legislatures, but so should every community. Experience warns us of the unwholesome effects of the continued maintenance of " special representation." In this connection it will not be out of place to state that a tentative scheme proposed by the Government of Madras in 1907 for special representation in the legislature of Brahmans, Mahomedans, Christians and " all other persons " was almost laughed out of court, so much so that that Government had to abandon the scheme. The Government of the United Provinces, too, in their despatch of 16th March, 1908, opposed " the sub-division of the electorate " on the ground that it " is certain to cause much heartburning."

23. We should like to add that we should have no objection to reservation of seats in the general electorates for the communities named where necessary and feasible, and as a temporary arrangement.

Special interests.

(CHAPTER XI. OF REPORT.)

24. With regard to this question also we are confronted by the same difficulty of the restricted terms of our reference. Our colleagues say :—(para. 318)]

> " In the absence of a communal settlement it is not possible for us to do more than discuss the general basis upon which in our view, representation should be accorded to these interests, though in accordance with the suggestion of the Round Table Conference* we make certain tentative suggestions as to the number of seats to be reserved in the case of all three groups."

The three groups are commerce and industry, landlords and universities.

25. We regret our inability to concur in the recommendations of the majority. We remain utterly unconvinced of the necessity or the justification of special electorates. In their absence there is no reason to suppose that any of them will fail to secure representation. Our colleagues say (para. 320) in justification of a special electorate to represent commerce and industry :—

> " While general constituencies may not infrequently return individuals whose knowledge and experience is such that they can make contributions of value in discussions on commercial and industrial questions, those members speak primarily as representatives of their constituency and they may on occasion find that the claims of that constituency are difficult to reconcile with a wholly dispassionate examination of particular economic issues."

We think that just the contrary will be the case. It is members elected by the proposed special electorates, and not those who represent general electorates, who will find real difficulty in making " a wholly dispassionate examination of particular economic issues." The reason is obvious.

1. Commerce.

26. Assuming without admitting that special representation should be retained, we fail to understand why there should be separate electorates of European and Indian commercial bodies when the representation is functional and not communal, nor why these

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* The reference is evidently to the Federal Structure sub-Committee of the Conference. The Conference itself made no recommendations.

special electorates should be sub-divided into several groups. Without prejudice to our objection to the departure from sound principle involved in the recommendation of the majority, we should urge that there should not be separate European and Indian commercial electorates, and secondly, that in each province all associations representative of commerce, trade and industry, should be combined into one special electorate. If it be thought that representatives of British interests will thereby fail to secure an adequate share, our answer is, firstly that the European electorate (which we apprehend will be retained) may be trusted to return a fair number of Europeans engaged in business, as has hitherto been done, and secondly that we shall have no objection to the reservation of a certain number of seats in the combined special commerce electorate for European business men.

27. We must further call attention to the inequality of representation as between European and Indian commerce and industry, in several provinces, as well as to the retention of the quite excessive representation accorded to the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

2. Landlords.

28. If the results of all the four elections held under the present Government of India Act have demonstrated one thing more than another, it is that the position of landlords is so strong that they have been able to secure a very large number of seats in general electorates and that special representation is utterly unnecessary. The relevant figures have been quoted by the Statutory Commission (vol. II, page 77). No fewer than 306 out of an aggregate of 719 seats in all the provincial councils were secured by landlords. We do not share the apprehension of our colleagues that they may fail to get an adequate amount of representation through general constituencies in the future. Even with the large increase of the electorate, it is our firm belief that except where particular landlord candidates may have made themselves unpopular with the general body of their tenants or the public they will have no less chance of success in the future than they have had until now. All legitimate rights of property being secured by an appropriate provision in the constitution, no other method need be devised for the special behoof of either this or any other interest.

29. If, however, special landlord electorates will be maintained, we are not satisfied of the reasonableness of retaining the present constituencies. While we agree that there should be no increase in the number of seats, there are not a few anomalies which require to be rectified, such as the very unequal and unfair distribution of seats between the taluqdars of Oudh and the zamindars of Agra,

zamindars of Oudh who are not taluqdars receiving no share at all. We shall be sorry if such patent anomalies and inequalities in the existing arrangement are to be continued.

3. Universities.

30. Here, too, we plead for the removal of anomalies and inequalities. There is no reason why some of the universities should be ignored altogether, while others continue to enjoy representation.

Aboriginal and Hill Tribes.

(CHAPTER XII OF THE REPORT.)

31. We are strongly opposed to separate electorates for any class or community and cannot subscribe to any proposal to create a fresh class or caste electorate. We therefore do not agree with our colleagues in recommending that seats should be set apart for aboriginal tribes. The reason advanced for special representation of these tribes is that they live a life entirely apart from the rest of the population and therefore their interests and welfare should be protected by efficient representation. The implication is that future governments will not look after their interests; but the experience of the past ten years shows that more attention has been paid by Ministers to the welfare of backward classes than before the reforms. More persons from these classes are likely to be brought on the electoral roll under the proposed extension of the franchise, and their advancement will be more rapid by being brought into closer association with the general population than by being kept aloof. Undoubtedly the uplift of these tribes should be an active concern of the legislatures. The areas they inhabit should no more be relegated to the position of " excluded areas." There is at present a number of non-official agencies working for their uplift, and with the extended franchise now proposed one or more of them will not find it difficult to secure election to the legislatures, and they will make the welfare of the tribes their special concern.

Military Service Qualification.

(CHAPTER XIII OF THE REPORT.)

32. We regret we are unable to endorse the recommendation of our colleagues that the military service qualification for the franchise should be maintained. This is the less necessary in view of the extension of the general franchise qualifications now proposed. It was introduced in 1919–20 because of the glamour of war then fresh in the people's mind. We are aware of no such differentiation in favour of service of one description in other countries and we do not think it need be perpetuated in ours. If, however, our colleagues' recommendation be accepted by authority, we think it fair that the privilege should be extended to the Auxiliary and Territorial Forces as well.

Multi-Member and Single-Member Constituences.

(CHAPTER XV OF THE REPORT.)

33. Here is another question a definite recommendation on which is difficult in the absence of a decision of the communal question. The main factors are :—

(1) That the simplest and most convenient arrangement would undoubtedly be comparatively small and compact single-member constituencies ;

(2) but that this consideration is outweighed by the circumstance that substantial justice to minorities, large or small, cannot be secured thereby ; and

(3) that the reservation of seats for any section of the people in general electorates is impossible except in multi-member constituencies.

Two considerations weigh with us—we do not want separate electorates, and we are equally earnest that no substantial minority shall suffer injustice. This double object can only be achieved by multi-member constituencies where necessary. We agree with Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao in urging that the present system of multi-member constituencies in Madras should be retained.* In the circumstances of that Presidency we endorse his opposition to the creation of single-member constituencies.

34. We are of the same opinion in regard to Bombay. At present seats are reserved for Marathas in that Presidency. The figures furnished by the Government of Bombay† to the Simon Commission show that in respect of population as well as of number of electors, the Marathas form a very respectable proportion of the total, and they are a majority in several constituencies. In nine constituencies for which figures have been given, the Marathas number 4,199,244 out of a total population of 6,476,538, while the number of Maratha voters is 99,622 in a total of 191,474. When the franchise is extended as we propose, their position will certainly be stronger. Therefore, we cannot agree with our colleagues that reservation of seats for them should be continued.

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* " I am of opinion that the creation of single-member constituencies in this country consisting of different races, castes, sub-castes and different shades of political opinion which must necessarily exist in any country, and different political parties with different political and social programmes, is an unsuitable method of securing a proper representation of the various elements in the population and for securing the representation of various shades of political opinion in the legislature."—Paragraph 10 of the memorandum of Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao.

† Appendix B to Chapter 8, Part II, of the Memorandum of the Government of Bombay on the Working of Reforms in that Presidency, pages 484–87.

Second Chambers in Provinces.

(CHAPTER XVI OF THE REPORT.)

35. While we recognise that there is no specific recommendation on this subject in the Report, we feel so keenly, our conviction is so strong that in the public interest second chambers ought not to be established in the provinces, that we deem it our duty to say so in unambiguous language. We cannot help thinking, in the circumstances in which the subject has been brought to the fore in the discussions on the new constitution, that second chambers are intended at least by some of the advocates of the innovation tc act as a "counterpoise" to councils elected on a wide franchise and representing the people at large. The theory of counterpoise was openly adumbrated in the Government of India's scheme of reforms dated 24th August, 1907; while in present discussions the upholders of vested interests are the most prominent advocates of second chambers. In a note on the Government of India's scheme referred to above, Sir Reginald Craddock, then Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces and now a Conservative member of Parliament, wrote as follows:—

> "A common criticism of the Government of India's scheme . . . . . is that the Government, who have by a long course of legislation endeavoured to check the arbitrary exercise of power by the landlords, great and small, of the country, is now seeking to invest these same classes with an importance and an authority of which their own legislation has pronounced them to be unworthy. It is not easy for the Government to escape . . . . . entirely from the criticism in so far as the idea of the aristocracy as such being set to check the literate classes as such can be read into the intentions of the Government scheme. . . . It is upon education that the whole case for extended councils is based. Were it not so, the case for giving enlarged influence to the landed classes would be no stronger now than it was twenty years ago, indeed it would be weaker, since those classes have admittedly lost some of their former hereditary predominance."
>
> "If in any province or part of India the aristocratic class continue to be so backward that they do not command public confidence, or are incapable of giving an opinion of value outside their own purely local interests, the policy should be to encourage them to educate themselves, and not to confer upon them duties or dignities for which they are unfitted."
>
> ". . . . . Such elective powers as are given should be free and unhampered by class restrictions. . . . I do not think it advisable to create constituencies made of artificial electorates

with no common tie but that of creed or occupation. . . . It would in my judgment be better . . . . not to anticipate that lawyers and schoolmasters will oust the landholding classes. . . ."

"There can be no doubt that the proposals of the Government . . . have aroused the suspicion that they are intended to cover, or will have the effect of covering, under the guise of concessions, an extension of the policy of divide and rule. . . ."

". . . . The risks attaching to a bold step forward are much less than those entailed by an advance too small, or by one which deviates too far from the direct road. . . ."

36. A recent writer* thus sums up the results of the bicameral system in the American States :—

"It increases the cost and complexity of the law-making machinery ; it facilitates, even actively encourages, the making of laws by a process of compromise, bargaining and log-rolling ; it compels all legislative proposals to follow a circuitous route on their way to final enactment ; it provides countless opportunities for obstruction and delay ; and it makes easy the shifting of responsibility for unpopular legislation. Finally, it has proved a barrier to the planning of the laws."

37. There are weighty reasons against the constitution of second chambers in provinces. The nature of subjects which it will be competent to provincial legislatures to consider ; the peculiar constitution of the councils, actual and proposed, which does away with the risk of hasty legislation ; the needless cost which one more house of the legislature will impose upon taxpayers already impoverished and overburdened—these are among the arguments against bicameral provincial legislatures, besides what have been stated in the Report. Our opposition to second chambers is therefore unqualified.

* Munro, Government of the United States, pages 459-60.

Federal Legislature.

(CHAPTER XX OF THE REPORT.)

38. In our opinion, the recommendations of our colleagues as regards the franchise for the Federal Assembly of the future are not adequate. They propose (para. 409) that the franchise for the present provincial councils should be the franchise for the future Assembly, with the addition of electors brought in by educational and literacy tests for men and women respectively and of a lower franchise in the Central Provinces and Berar in order to double the number of the present Council electors in that province. This will mean the enfranchisement of about 3·5 per cent. of the population—which is the present average for the whole of British India for provincial councils—supplemented by the numbers that will be brought in by the additional qualifications which have been proposed. We do not suppose that the total will be brought up to even five per cent. of the population. When it is borne in mind that the present Assembly has repeatedly been held up for its unrepresentative character and that this has been urged as an excuse for the Government's disregard of the views and wishes of that body, and as it is intended that the Assembly of the future should be endowed with some power over the Executive and therefore charged with vastly greater responsibilities, we cannot but think that an electorate which will be hardly five per cent. of the population is utterly inadequate. In Bihar and Orissa it will be less than two per cent., while in the Central Provinces and Berar it will be about three per cent. only. In our opinion, there are advantages, both political and administrative, in having the same franchise for both provincial councils and the Federal Assembly. The chief political advantage is that then the Assembly will be representative of a little over 14 per cent. of the population. The administrative advantages are that two separate electoral rolls will not have to be prepared, and that the polling will be simpler. Against these considerations is urged the enormous increase of electors in each constituency and the great difficulty which candidates will experience in conducting their election campaigns. While we recognise the force of this argument, we cannot by any means regard it as conclusive. Our colleagues' proposal will still impose upon candidates the necessity of dealing with such numbers that they will find it impossible to canvas electors individually. The chief factor is the area of constituencies and not the number of electors, and owing to the proposed increase of the size of the Assembly the area of every constituency will be much smaller than at present. Therefore, even if the numbers are increased as we propose, the task of candidates will be easier than it is at present. The argument of administrative convenience is more in favour of our proposal than that of the majority.

39. With one argument that has been urged in defence of the smaller electorate that has been proposed, we do not agree at all. Our colleagues say (para. 412) that " most of the matters dealt with by the Federal Assembly will affect the mass of the population less directly than do the matters under the control of the provincial legislatures." We do contend that tariffs and customs and other subjects of which the central legislature will be seized have a direct bearing on the lives of the people, particularly of a people as poor as the people of India are; while all the influence that can be exerted by the Assembly on questions of army policy and military expenditure will also concern the people materially as the proportion of revenue spent upon defence determines how much of it will be available for beneficient activities.

40. We are opposed to any representation of " special interests " in either house of the federal legislature even more strongly than to such representation in the provinces. There is still less need for it there, and we shall be sorry to see it maintained both because the representation of general constituencies will thereby be curtailed and because the importance of sectional as opposed to general interests will be unduly magnified.

Mr. Bakhale would make an exception in favour of Labour. As Labour is a central subject, it requires special representation in the federal or central legislature.

41. While we agree that election to the upper house of the federal legislature should be indirect and the constituencies should be the provincial legislatures, we must affirm our opposition to members of the second chambers of the latter—if, unfortunately, they be brought into existence anywhere—being allowed to participate in the election. The argument in support of election by the provincial legislatures is that representation in the upper house should be of federating units and not of the population. The sole representative organ of each federating unit will be the popular elected house of legislature, and we cannot agree to the smaller, less representative and therefore less important house having any voice in the matter.

42. Neither can we agree with the majority when they state (para. 399) that " the question of the representation of those sections of the provincial legislature which will not be able to secure " representation in the upper house of the federal legislature by the single transferable vote " will require consideration later," for representation in that house will be states and provinces and not of classes or communities.

43. We are decidedly opposed to the filling of vacancies in provincial legislatures occurring by reason of any members thereof being elected to the upper house of the federal legislature, by

co-option by the legislatures themselves. This will amount to the disenfranchisement of the constituencies concerned—a punishment which they will not have at all deserved. Besides, members so co-opted will not possess a representative character and their views will not carry the weight which would attach to the opinions of their colleagues duly elected by the people.

44. It would have been a matter of deep gratification to us if we had been able to avoid any dissent from the recommendations of our colleagues. We regret that this has not been possible. It is our conviction that the object and purpose of reform will not only not be adequately fulfilled, but may be frustrated by some of the recommendations of the majority. And keen as we are that this should not be and that the reforms should in reality be a large measure of political appeasement, we commend our proposals to serious consideration.

45. As the Committee have not finally adopted the Report at the time of submission of this Minute, we shall have to hand in an Addendum to it, if that should be necessary.

(Sd.) S. B. TAMBE.
,, C. Y. CHINTAMANI.
,, R. R. BAKHALE.

SIMLA,
30*th April*, 1932.

BRIEF NOTE BY A MAJORITY OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE MINUTE OF DISSENT SUBMITTED BY MESSRS. S. B. TAMBE, C. Y. CHINTAMANI AND R. R. BAKHALE.*

1. We received this minute on the afternoon before the date fixed for the signing of our report. There has, therefore, been no time to prepare an elaborate rejoinder, even had this been considered desirable. We feel however that so lengthy a minute cannot pass unanswered, since many of the statements in it are liable to create misunderstanding about the recommendations in the report.

Adult suffrage in large cities.

2. We note that our colleagues agree with us that the general introduction of adult suffrage is precluded by the administrative difficulties but they wish it to be introduced in the large cities immediately. With reference to this proposal, we need only add to the examination of the question made in para. 49 of our report that the introduction of adult suffrage in large industrial centres, like many of the towns mentioned by our colleagues, would necessitate a reconsideration of the proposals in Chapter IX of our report regarding the representation of labour which, subject to the qualifying note by the Hon. Mr. Miller, received the approval of the entire committee.

A wage qualification.

3. The suggestion that the receipt of wages should be made a qualification for the franchise received our very careful consideration, both in its general aspect (para. 85) and in connection with the representation of labour (para. 231). Our colleagues give no reason for their view that a " wage census " is both practicable and desirable as a basis for the electoral roll, which is what we are concerned with at present, and we are unable to recommend for practical consideration their proposal that " every labourer, rural or urban, who has been in receipt of wages of Rs. 10 a month or its equivalent in kind continuously for the six months preceding the preparation of the roll should be brought on the register " On the figures they quote, a scheme of this kind would necessitate detailed enquiries into the earnings in cash and in kind of 25 or 30 million people—an extremely difficult and costly task.

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*This note was considered at an informal meeting on 2nd May, 1932, at which all members of the Committee in Simla were present except Messrs. Tambe, Chintamani, Bakhale, and Mrs. Subbarayan. These members were not invited since it was clear from the terms of their Minutes that they could not associate themselves with this reply.

Unenfranchised labour.

4. We must demur to the suggestion that more than 48 million people out of 255 million or about 20 per cent. of the whole population have been left entirely unenfranchised under our proposals. In the first place these figures are entirely misleading, since at least half of the 48 millions consist of women and dependants. The adult population of India is 130 millions and the male adult population 67 millions. Our proposals will give the direct vote to nearly 30 million men or 44 per cent. of the adult male population. Only 37 millions will be left who will not be enfranchised. A substantial proportion of the landless labourers in town and country will be enfranchised under the proposals we make regarding the depressed classes (Chapter X) while a number of others will secure representation through the measures proposed in Chapter IX for the representation of labour. The suggestion that we have made no provision for the representation of agricultural and non-agricultural labour reveals therefore a fundamental misunderstanding of our scheme.

The Provincial franchise schemes.

5. Turning now to the provincial franchise schemes, we have given reasons in our report (paras. 110–115) for holding that it would be unwise to increase the electorate in Bombay to a greater extent than we propose. As it is, our scheme goes somewhat beyond what the local Government considers to be administratively feasible. Our colleagues further recommend that the house rent qualification in the city of Bombay should be reduced from Rs. 60 to Rs. 36. This proposal was considered by our committee but abandoned after we had ascertained from the local Government that the average rent for a room in a Bombay *chawl* is Rs. 5-8-0 per mensem.

6. We discussed with the Government of the United Provinces the suggestion that members of joint families should be enfranchised in certain areas but found them strongly opposed to it on legal and other grounds. The local Government have put forward a very liberal scheme of enfranchisement, and we are not prepared to press them to enlarge it, especially as a large number of members of joint families will be qualified under the upper primary educational standard which we propose to introduce. In the case of the Punjab, we have made the same recommendation as our colleagues in regard to the *haisiyat* tax, and it is not clear why it should be considered necessary to repeat it in this minute of dissent. As to Assam, the suggestion that we have accepted as adequate the local Government's proposal to enfranchise 10 per cent. of the population gives an entirely erroneous view of our action. We have in fact added to the electorate proposed by the local Government no less than 220,000 women, bringing the total up to over 12 per cent. of the total population. A similar addition to the Provincial Committee's

scheme would have brought the total up to over 17 per cent. and we are satisfied that in Assam with its large undeveloped tracts, sparse population and scanty staff, any such electorate would be quite unmanageable. In addition to the provision we propose in respect of the women's franchise, we are recommending special representation for the aboriginal population and for the labourers employed on tea gardens which will cover considerably over 1,000,000 persons.

Statutory increase of the electorate.

7. As regards the suggestion of our colleagues that statutory provision should be made for an increase of the electorate after every 10 years, so as to lead to adult suffrage throughout the country in a period not exceeding thirty years, we consider it a mistake to try to control the future. We prefer to trust the responsible legislatures of India rather than ask Parliament to prejudge the issue.

Women.

8. We are unable to confirm our colleagues' remark that there was a strong and almost unanimous expression of opinion by women witnesses against communal electorates for women. The matter was indeed mentioned by some women and women's associations who appeared before us or submitted written statements, but as the subject was clearly beyond the scope of our terms of reference under the Prime Minister's instructions, we did not invite evidence or cross examine witnesses on the subject. Our own recommendation in regard to the representation of women in the legislatures does not prejudge the issue one way or the other.

Depressed classes.

9. It is unnecessary to deal at length with our colleagues' observations in regard to the depressed classes, more especially as we observe that, like most of the authorities who have supplied us with information on the subject, they are at variance among themselves. We also observe that some of the points discussed in the minute were not raised by our colleagues in the Committee. In regard to the statistics of the depressed class population, we are glad to notice that, although our colleagues cast some doubt on the method by which we arrived at our figures for the depressed classes in Madras, Bombay and the Central Provinces, they are nevertheless prepared to accept them. We are also agreed upon the figures given for Assam and there is little difference between us in regard to the Punjab.

10. In the United Provinces and in Bengal, where we ourselves have not felt competent to reach a definite figure, our colleagues have accepted the estimates given by the local Committees. We would only remark in this connection that the local Committee of the

United Provinces appear to have confined themselves to only one of the two tests of untouchability upon which we unanimously agreed in our report; and that we cannot admit in Bengal, where so wide a difference of opinion has shown itself, that "it is not necessary to make any further enquiries into the numbers".

11. There is only one province, Bihar and Orissa, where we have given a definite estimate of the number of the depressed classes, which our colleagues do not accept. In this province, we had the assistance of no fewer than five authorities in arriving at our decision. The census of 1911, 1921 and 1931, the local Committee, and Mr. Hallett, Chief Secretary to the Government, are all unanimous in declaring that eight castes, the Dom, Chamar, Dusadh, Mushar, Pasi, Mochi, Pan and Hari, satisfy the two tests referred to in para. 285 of our report. These castes number 3,973,953. Our estimate of 4,300,000 includes also about 400,000 persons belonging to minor castes whose numbers individually are small. Our colleagues appear to have based their calculations on a single remark made by one of these authorities, referring to only one of the two tests we have mentioned. We are therefore unable to modify our opinion on this matter.

With reference to our colleagues' remarks about the misunderstanding alleged to have been caused by the revised questionnaire which was issued on the 11th February, 1931, we would merely point out that they approved of the questionnaire before it was issued, and never gave us any indication subsequently that they thought it misleading or in need of amendment. We have suggested further examination of a number of points relating to the depressed classes, and the present views of our colleagues will no doubt receive due consideration in this connection.

Minor minorities and special interests.

12. As regards minor minorities we observe that our colleagues have no objection to the reservation of seats for the communities concerned. The question of the form which such reservation should take is outside the scope of our reference, and it was at the instance of one of the dissentient members that the discussion of the matter was ruled out of order by the Chairman as involving the communal issue. As regards special interests, we would merely add that we also have suggested the examination of the desirability of redistributing or rearranging the landlord and university constituencies, when the general constituencies are being delimited.

Aboriginal and hill tribes.

13. We feel very strongly the necessity of providing adequately for the representation of tribal races and others, who have suffered so severely in the past from the ignorance of administrators and

legislators as to their special customs and conditions. We have come to no final conclusion as to the method of representation which should be adopted, but must repeat our recommendation, that the matter should be examined in detail at a later stage during the delimitation of constituencies. We are not prepared to leave the aboriginal tribes to take their chance in general constituencies, as our colleagues apparently suggest.

Second chambers.

14. As regards second chambers, we abstain from comment, except to remark that we have for the reasons set forth in Chapter XVI of our report refrained from making any recommendations at the present stage as the matter involves constitutional issues which are beyond the scope of our reference. We have merely set forth the evidence we have collected, and the arguments which can be advanced on either side in such a way as to facilitate a decision at a later stage.

The Federal legislature.

15. Our colleagues have criticised our proposals for the Federal Legislature, but we would point out that it is quite misleading to refer to the Assembly alone. The Federal Assembly will represent directly an electorate more than seven times as large as the present electorate, and the Senate will represent, indirectly, the 36,000,000 voters whom our colleagues wish to enfranchise immediately for the Assembly, despite the overwhelming practical difficulties we point out in paragraph 407.

Conclusion.

16. We have given careful consideration to the criticisms and proposals of our colleagues, but they have not led us to wish to modify in any respect the carefully balanced scheme set forth in the pages of our report.

APPENDIX I.

Letter from the Prime Minister, to the Chairman, Franchise Committee, dated the 29th December, 1931.

I have to communicate to you the wishes of His Majesty's Government as to the investigation to be undertaken by the Franchise Committee, whose appointment was foreshadowed in paragraph 15 of the statement which I made to the Round Table Conference on 1st December last.

2. To your Committee His Majesty's Government will look for complete and detailed proposals on which to base the revision of the franchise and the arrangement of constituencies for the new legislatures, Central and Provincial, which are to form part of the Constitution envisaged in the statement to which I have referred: and since upon these detailed proposals must largely depend the size and actual composition of the legislatures, His Majesty's Government hope that your Committee will be in a position in due course so to frame their proposals as to present a complete and detailed scheme for the composition of each of the Provincial Legislatures and of the Federal Legislature. It is apparent, however, that until decisions have been taken upon certain questions of principle which still remain unsettled, your Committee will not be in a position to draw up such a plan in its entirety: my present purpose is therefore to indicate the lines upon which you should approach your task in the immediate future.

3. You are aware that the present electorate in Indian provinces amounts to less than 3 per cent. of the population of the areas returning members to Provincial Councils, and it is obvious that under this limited franchise, the majority of the people and many large and important sections of the community can enjoy no effective representation in the legislatures. The principle of a responsible Federal Government, subject to certain reservations and safeguards has been accepted by His Majesty's Government while it has been decided that the Governors' Provinces are to become responsibly governed units, enjoying the greatest possible measure of freedom from outside interference and dictation in carrying out their own policies in their own sphere. In these circumstances, it is clearly necessary so to widen the electorate that the legislatures to which responsibility is to be entrusted should be representative of the general mass of the population and that no important section of the community may lack the means of expressing its needs and its opinions.

4. Your Committee will, of course, give full weight to the report of the Franchise Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference and the interesting discussions held by that Sub-Committee on the questions submitted to it. As the form of the new Central or Federal Legislature had, at the date of its deliberation, not yet been decided, the Sub-Committee found it impossible to make suggestions regarding a suitable franchise system for it and their discussions referred primarily to the provincial electorates. It was generally held that adult suffrage was the goal which should ultimately be attained, but the majority of the Sub-Committee considered that it was only practicable to reach that goal by stages, though it was agreed that the basis of the franchise could forthwith be broadened, and that a large increase was desirable. The Sub-Committee recommended with some dissentients "the immediate increase of the electorate so as to enfranchise not less than 10 per cent. of the population, and indeed a larger number—but not more than 25 per cent. of total population—if that should, on full investigation, be found practicable and desirable." They also recommended that, in view of the practical difficulties of enlarging the electorates to an extent which

would give direct representation to a larger section of the population, consideration should be given to the introduction of a scheme by which all adults not entitled to a direct vote would be grouped together in primary groups of about 20 or in some other suitable manner, for the election of one representative member of each group, who would be entitled to vote in provincial electorates either in the same constituencies as the directly qualified voters or in separate constituencies to be framed for them. It is the wish of His Majesty's Government that your Committee should consider in the first place what extension of the franchise for the provincial legislatures is desirable and administratively feasible, and the possibility of supplementing direct representation by a system of group representation or otherwise; and your inquiry will doubtless be so conducted as to elicit information which will enable you to frame proposals for the electorates, constituencies and methods of election which will be required to produce a federal legislature of the type indicated in the third report of the Federal Structure Committee.

5. I need not recapitulate in detail the suggestions of the Franchise Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference regarding the various matters which arise in connection with the qualification for the franchise—the removal of disparities between urban and rural enfranchisement, the desirability or otherwise of giving each community a voting strength proportionate to its numbers, the extension of the existing military service qualification and the introduction of a new educational qualification. These questions and others will doubtless come under the notice of your Committee and will receive due consideration. But I desire to say that His Majesty's Government attach special importance to the question of securing a more adequate enfranchisement of women than the existing system, which applies to women the same qualifications as to men, and has produced a women's electorate numbering less than one-twentieth of the total male electorate. Your Committee should also consider by what methods the representation of labour can most effectively be secured.

6. It is evident from the discussions which have occurred in various connections in the Conference that the new constitution must make adequate provision for the representation of the depressed classes and that the method of representation by nomination is no longer regarded as appropriate. As you are aware, there is difference of opinion whether the system of separate electorates should be instituted for the depressed classes and your Committee's investigations should contribute towards the decision of this question by indicating the extent to which the depressed classes would be likely, through such general extension of the franchise as you may recommend, to secure the right to vote in ordinary electorates. On the other hand, should it be decided eventually to constitute separate electorates for the depressed classes, either generally or in those Provinces in which they form a distinct and separable element in the population, your Committee's inquiry into the general problem of extending the franchise should place you in possession of facts which would facilitate the devising of a method of separate representation for the depressed classes.

7. As regards the general question of maintenance, modification or abolition of the existing system of separate communal electorates I can only draw your attention to the observations which I made upon this matter in paragraphs 12 and 13 of the statement which I made to the Conference on 1st December and in my speech in the House of Commons in the debate upon that statement on 2nd December.

It is not, of course, the function of your Committee to attempt a settlement of the communal problem, but it is clear that the question of communal electorates and the connected question of apportionment of seats in the legislatures to the several communities must be settled before your Committee

can be asked to undertake the task of preparing a detailed scheme for the composition of the legislatures and for the arrangement of the constituencies upon which they are to be based. As you are aware the Government are deeply anxious that this settlement should be by agreement amongst the communities themselves. Meanwhile, I recognise, that even the present phase of your inquiry may be hampered if you are not in possession of a provisional working hypothesis. His Majesty's Government desire your Committee therefore to proceed, in so far as you may find that the absence of such an assumption would preclude you from arriving at conclusions, on the assumption that separate communal electorates will continue to form a feature of the new constitution.

8. The various Provincial Governments have, during the last twelve years, accumulated a store of experience of the working of the existing electoral machinery which should prove invaluable to your Committee, and His Majesty's Government desire that this experience should be made available to you through Provincial Committees constituted in each province by the local Government which, while being composed in the main of non-official representatives, would each contain a member or members with official experience of these matters, and to which official records of each Government would be made available. I trust that your Lordship will take early steps to place yourself in touch with the local Governments and with their Provincial Committees, and will guide their inquiries by questionnaire or such other means as you deem suitable on lines which will enable you to co-ordinate their efforts and to bring the Provincial Committees into co-operation with your own Committee in the formulation of your proposals.

9. I should add that if, as seems probable, you find it impossible to complete your inquiry during the present cold weather, you will no doubt consider, in the light of the progress made in your first tour, whether an interim report on points upon which you may have been able to reach provisional or final conclusions will not serve to expedite the progress of the general inquiry of which your Committee's investigations form part.

APPENDIX II.

Members of the Madras Provincial Franchise Committee.

1. M. R. Ry. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar Avargal (Chairman).
2. M. R. Ry. M. R. Seturatnam Ayyar Avargal.
3. M. R. Ry. Diwan Bahadur J. Venkatnarayana Nayudu Guru, C.I.E.
4. M. R. Ry. Daniel Thomas Avargal, M.L.C.
5. M. R. Ry. N. Sivaraj Avargal, M.L.C.
6. Khan Bahadur Yahya Ali Sahib Bahadur, M.L.C.
7. Mr. F. E. James, M.L.C.
8. M. R. Ry. C. Basudev Nayudu Guru, M.L.C.
9. Mrs. Paul Appaswami.
10. V. Appa Rao, Zamindar of Mirzapuram, M.L.C.
11. M. R. Ry. M. A. Muthiah Chettiyar Avargal, M.L.C.
12. M. R. Ry. T. S. Ramaswami Ayyar Avargal, M.L.C.
13. M. R. Ry. K. Raman Menon Avargal, M.L.C.
14. Mr. C. A. Souter, I.C.S.
15. Mr. R. G. Grieve, C.I.E.
16. M. R. Ry. Rai Bahadur N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar Avargal.
17. Mr. T. G. Rutherford, C.I.E., I.C.S. (Secretary).

Members of the Bombay Provincial Franchise Committee.

1. Mr. S. H. Covernton, C.I.E., I.C.S. (Chairman).
2. Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale, M.L.C.
3. Sardar V. N. Mutalik.
4. Mr. B. V. Jadhav, M.L.A.
5. Rao Bahadur S. N. Angadi, M.L.C.
6. Mr. G. L. Winterbotham.
7. Dr. P. G. Solanki, M.L.C.
8. Khan Bahadur Allahbaksh, M.L.C.
9. Mr. J. B. Petit, M.L.C.
10. Dr. Alban D'Souza, M.L.C.
11. Mr. A. O. Koreishi.
12. Rao Bahadur R. S. Asavale.
13. Mr. Ibrahim Suleiman Haji.
14. Mr. Stanley Henry Prater.
15. Mr. Sayyid Munawar.
16. Mr. C. W. A. Turner, C.I.E., I.C.S.
17. Mr. N. J. Wadia, I.C.S.
18. Mr. G. S. Rajadhyaksha, I.C.S.
19. Mrs. Tarabai Manilal Premchand.
20. Mr. P. N. Moos, I.C.S. (Secretary).

Members of the Bengal Provincial Franchise Committee.

1. The Honourable Mr. Khawaja Nazim-ud-Din, C.I.E. (Chairman).
2. Khan Bahadur Muhammad Abdul Mumin, M.L.C.
3. Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan, M.L.C.
4. Mr. A. F. Rahman, M.L.C.
5. The Honourable Mr. Bijoy Prasad Singh Roy.
6. Mr. B. C. Chatterjee, M.L.C.
7. Mr. S. M. Bose, M.L.C.
8. Mr. Narendra Kumar Basu, M.L.C.
9. Mr. C. G. Cooper, M.L.C.
10. Mr. E. T. McCluskie, M.L.C.
11. Mr. Mukunda Behary Mallick, M.L.C.

Members of the Bengal Provincial Franchise Committee—*contd.*

12. Mr. K. C. Roy.
13. Mrs. P. K. Bose.
14. Mr. F. W. Robertson, I.C.S.
15. Mr. G. P. Hogg, I.C.S.
16. Mr. H. Graham, I.C.S. (Secretary).

Members of the United Provinces Provincial Franchise Committee.

1. Rai Rajeshwar Bali (Chairman).
2. Raja Jagannath Bakhsh Singh.
3. Khan Bahadur Hafiz Hidayat Husain.
4. Khan Bahadur Maulvi Faish-ud-din.
5. Captain Nawab Jamshed Ali Khan.
6. Rao Bahadur Thakur Bikram Singh.
7. Mr. H. C. Desangés.
8. Rai Sahib Babu Rama Charana.
9. Mrs. J. P. Srivastava.
10. Dr. K. N. Malaviya.
11. Mr. Ram Sahai.
12. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru.
13. Mr. J. H. Darwin, I.C.S.
14. Dr. S. S. Nehru, I.C.S. (Secretary).

Members of the Punjab Provincial Franchise Committee.

1. Mr. Miles Irving, C.I.E., O.B.E., I.C.S. (Chairman).
2. Mr. Owen Roberts, M.L.C.
3. Sardar Buta Singh, B.A., LL.B., M.L.C., Deputy President, Punjab Legislative Council.
4. Pandit Nanak Chand, M.L.C.
5. Rai Bahadur Chaudhri Chootu Ram, B.A., LL.B., M.L.C.
6. Khan Bahadur Shaik Din Muhammad, M.A., LL.B., M.L.C.
7. Chaudhri Nazir Hussain, B.A., LL.B., M.L.C.
8. Khan Bahadur Quraishi Muhammad Hayat, C.I.E., M.L.C.
9. Mrs. G. C. Chatterjee.
10. Mr. M. A. Ghani, M.L.C.
11. Mr. Hans Raj.

Members of the Bihar and Orissa Provincial Franchise Committee.

1. Babu Chandreshwar Prashad Narayan Singh (Chairman).
2. Lady Imam.
3. Rai Bahadur Lakshmidhar Mahanti.
4. Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Ray.
5. Mr. Saiyid Athar Husain.
6. Reverend Brajananda Das.
7. Babu Swayambar Das.
8. Babu Shiva Shankar Jha.
9. Babu Gursahay Lal.
10. Maulvi Saiyid Mubarak Ali Sahib.
11. Mr. A. P. Middleton, I.C.S.
12. Mr. C. E. Owen, I.C.S.
13. Rai Bahadur Satish Chandra Mukarji (Secretary).

Members of the Central Provinces Provincial Franchise Committee.

1. The Honourable Sir Arthur Nelson, Kt., C.I.E., O.B.E., I.C.S. (Chairman).
2. Rai Bahadur K. S. Nayudu, M.L.C.
3. Rai Sahib Dwarkanath Singh, M.L.C.
4. Rao Sahib U. S. Patil, M.L.C.
5. Mr. V. S. Chaubal, M.L.C.
6. Mr. R. W. Fulay, M.L.C.
7. Mr. G. A. Gavai, M.L.C.
8. Mr. G. R. Joshi, M.L.C.
9. Mr. R. A. Kanitkar, M.L.C.
10. Mr. M. Y. Shareef, Barrister-at-Law, M.L.C.
11. Sardar Bahadur J. N. Rodrigues.
12. Mr. Shiyam Sundar Bhargava.
13. Mrs. Tambe.
14. Mr. E. Gordon, C.I.E., I.C.S.
15. Mr. R. E. Pollock, I.C.S.
16. Mr. W. H. Shoobert, I.C.S.

Mr. C. J. W. Lillie, I.C.S. (Secretary).

Members of the Assam Provincial Franchise Committee.

1. Mr. E. S. Roffey (Chairman).
2. Rai Bahadur Nagendra Nath Choudhuri, M.L.C.
3. Khan Bahadur Dewan Abdur Rahim Chowdhury, M.L.C.
4. Khan Bahadur Maulvi Nuruddin Ahmed, M.L.C.
5. Rai Sahib Pyari Mohan Das, M.L.C.
6. Maulvi Monowar Ali, M.L.C.
7. Srijut Brindaban Chandra Goswami, M.L.C.
8. Srijut Rohini Kumar Choudhuri, M.L.C.
9. Srijut Mohendra Nath Gohain, M.L.C.
10. Mr. K. Cantlie, I.C.S.
11. Mr. C. S. Mullan, I.C.S.
12. Mrs. Z. Rahman.
13. Mr. B. K. Z. Sarwar.
14. Mr. J. A. Dawson, C.I.E., I.C.S. (Secretary).

Members of the North-West Frontier Province Provincial Franchise Committee.

1. Mr. J. S. Thomson, I.C.S. (Chairman).
2. Nawab Major Sir Muhammad Akbar Khan, K.B.E., C.I.E., of Hoti.
3. Sahibzada Nawab Sir Abdul Qaiyum Khan, K.C.I.E., M.L.A.
4. Major Ahmed Nawaz Khan, O.B.E., Nawab of Dera.
5. Khan Bahadur Abdul Rahim Khan, M.B.E.
6. Malik-ur-Rahman Khan.
7. Rai Sahib Mehar Chand Khanna.
8. Sardar Raja Singh.
9. Mr. Muhammad Akram Khan.
10. M. Muhammad Jan Khan.
11. M. Ghulam Rabbani.
12. Sir Hissamuddin Khan, Kt., CIE.
13. Mr. Muhammad Aslam Khan.
14. Mr. Muhammad Yunis Khan.
15. Mr. Aurangzeb Khan.

APPENDIX III.

INDIAN FRANCHISE COMMITTEE.

QUESTIONNAIRE.

Preliminary heads of inquiry.

Having regard to the wide range of inquiries which it is necessary for the Franchise Committee to undertake before it can frame detailed plans for the constitution of several legislatures the Chairman is of opinion that it is very improbable, if not impossible, that the Committee will be able to cover the whole field during the first stage of their inquiry. In order to provide a practical programme it will therefore be necessary to concentrate attention in the first instance on the fundamental question of the franchise to be adopted in the constituencies which will elect the various legislatures.

It may therefore be necessary to postpone inquiries relating to the representation of special interests, the advisability of creating bicameral legislatures in Provinces, the qualification and disqualification of candidates and other subsidiary though important questions until a later stage of the Committee's investigations. A further questionnaire relating to these matters will be issued in due course. The following questionnaire deals with the franchise to be adopted for the Provincial and Central Legislatures. Questions relating to the representation of women, labour and depressed classes have been included because the solution of these problems depends largely on the extent to which the basis of suffrage can be widened in general constituencies.

I.—PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES.

1. Extension of the franchise.

Having regard to the fact that the principle of a responsible federal government, subject to certain reservations and safeguards, has been accepted by His Majesty's Government, and that the governor's provinces are to become responsibly governed units, enjoying the greatest possible measure of freedom from outside interference and dictation in carrying out their own policies in their own sphere, it is obviously necessary so to widen the electorates that the legislatures to which responsibility is to be entrusted should be representative of the general mass of the population, and that no important section of the community may lack the means of expressing its needs and its opinion. The Franchise Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference considered that adult suffrage was the goal which should ultimately be attained, but the majority thought that it was not practicable to reach that goal immediately and recommended " the immediate increase of the electorate so as to enfranchise not less than 10 per cent. of the population, and indeed a larger number—but not more than 25 per cent. of the total population—if that should on full investigation be found practicable and desirable."

(*a*) What means can you suggest by which the existing franchise for the Provincial Legislature could be extended so as to include 10 per cent. of the population in the electoral roll ?

(*b*) Do you consider that such an electorate will be capable of casting an intelligent vote ?

(*c*) Do you consider that such an electorate would be administratively manageable having regard to the arrangements likely to be feasible for the preparation, maintenance and revision of the electoral rolls, and for the recording and counting of votes ?

(*d*) If the answer to (*b*) and (*c*) is in the negative, what alternative qualifications for the electorate would you propose ?

(*e*) If the answer to (*b*) and (*c*) is in the affirmative, do you consider that it would be practicable and desirable, having regard to the same considerations, to enlarge the electoral roll still further and, if so, what means would you suggest for the purpose ?

(*f*) It has been suggested that, assuming adult suffrage to be impracticable at present, all adults not entitled to a direct vote should be grouped together in primary groups of about 20 or in some other suitable manner for the election of one or more representative members from each group, who would be entitled to vote in the provincial elections either in the same constituencies as the directly qualified voters or in separate constituencies to be framed for them. The suggestion has been discussed mainly with reference to rural villages, but might be made applicable to towns also.

Do you consider that any such system would be feasible and advantageous in the areas with which you are acquainted, and, if so, would you advise that the group electors should vote in the same constituencies as the directly qualified electors, or in separate constituencies composed of group electors only ?

(*g*) It has been proposed that in the event of separate constituencies being framed for group electors, only group electors should be qualified to stand as candidates for such constituencies.

Are you in favour of this course ?

(*h*) Do you consider that it would be feasible and advantageous to abolish all the existing qualifications for voters and to extend a system of the nature described in (*f*), and to confine the electorate for all constituencies to secondaries chosen by groups of primary voters ?

(*i*) In the event of your answer to (*f*) or (*h*) being in the affirmative, what do you consider would be a suitable size for the groups referred to above ? On what basis would you constitute them, and whom would you charge with the duties of framing them ?

(*j*) Would you require any special qualification, whether property, educational or other, in the persons chosen by such groups to vote on their behalf for the election of members ? If so, what ?

2. Franchise qualifications.

(*a*) Do you consider that in the areas with which you are acquainted there is any marked disparity in the operation of the franchise qualifications in urban as compared with rural areas ? If so, what measures would you suggest in order to rectify such disparities ?

(*b*) It has been suggested that each community should be given a voting strength proportionate to its numbers, and that the franchise system should be so contrived as to secure this result, in so far as it may be practicable.

Are you in agreement with this suggestion, and, if so, what measures would you suggest for giving effect to it in your province on the assumption (i) that separate electorates are retained, (ii) of joint electorates with reservation of seats, and (iii) of joint electorates without reservation of seats ?

(*c*) Is the possession of property of some kind in your opinion a suitable test of fitness for the franchise ? (The term " property " should be understood in its widest sense as including not only the ownership of landed property but also the occupation of land or house property or the receipt of income or wages whether in cash or kind.) If so, do you consider the existing property qualifications suitable ? If you do not, what modification do you suggest ?

(*d*) Are you in favour of introducing a qualification based on education, independently of property? If so, what educational qualification would you suggest?

(*e*) Are you in favour of retaining the existing military service qualification and extending it so as to include service in the Auxiliary and Territorial Forces?

3. Women's suffrage.

(*a*) At present women are admitted to the suffrage on the same terms as men, but as the existing qualifications are mainly based on property and the payment of taxes, the number of women on the provincial electoral rolls is only a little over a quarter of a million as compared with 6½ million men. The Statutory Commission proposed that the wives and widows (if over 25 years of age) of men entitled to vote under the property qualification, should be enfranchised, and that in addition an educational qualification should apply to women over 21, as well as to men. In the Franchise Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference it was suggested that the age limit should be 21 for women as well as for men.

Are you in favour of increasing the women's electorate in the ways suggested or would you prefer any other method? If so, what method? To what extent would you favour an increase in women's electorate?

(*b*) In the event of a system of group representation being established as proposed in paragraph 1 (*f*), do you consider that women should be formed into groups, and, if so, should separate groups be formed for women or should groups contain both men and women?

(*c*) The suggestion has been made that at any rate as a temporary measure the legislature should co-opt women members to an extent not exceeding 5 per cent. by a system of proportional representation so as to ensure some representation of women in the legislature. What are your views on this suggestion?

4. Representation of the depressed classes.

It is evident from the discussions which have occurred in various connections in the Round Table Conference, that it is generally felt that provision should be made in the new constitution for better representation of the depressed classes, and that the method of representation by nomination is no longer regarded as appropriate.

What communities would you include as belonging to depressed classes? Would you include classes other than untouchables, and if so, which?

Do you consider that the depressed classes are likely, through such general extension of the franchise as you favour, to secure representatives of their own choice in the general electorates, and if so, to what extent? If your answer is in the negative, what specific proposals would you make to secure their representation in the legislatures? The possible application of the group system of representation to the depressed classes should be specially considered.

5. Representation of labour.

Assuming that such widening of the basis of suffrage n general constituencies as is found practicable does not provide adequate representation of labour, what special measures would you recommend for representation of labour (*a*) where it is or can be organised as in industrial areas, (*b*) where it is unorganised as in the case of agricultural and plantation labour? On what basis would you allot representation to labour in each case?

5A. Representation of special interests.

What are your views as to the retention of the representation of special interests (Universities, Commerce, European and Indian, Mining, Planting, Labour, Landholders, etc.) in the legislatures ? If you favour its retention, do you consider that the existing methods of election thereto are satisfactory ? If not, what suggestions would you make ?

II.—THE FEDERAL LEGISLATURE.

6. Allocation of seats to British Indian Provinces.

In the third report of the Federal Structure Committee the following allocation of seats to provinces of British India in the two chambers of the Federal Legislature was tentatively suggested :—

Names of provinces.	Upper Chamber.	Lower Chamber.
Madras	17	32
Bombay	17	26
Bengal	17	32
United Provinces	17	32
Punjab	17	26
Bihar and Orissa	17	26
Central Provinces (if Berar is included)	7	12
Assam	5	7
North-West Frontier Province	2	3
Delhi	1	1
Ajmer-Merwara	1	1
Coorg	1	1
British Baluchistan	1	1
	120	200

As a working hypothesis for the purpose of arithmetical calculation at the present stage it may be assumed that the Federal Legislature will be approximately of the size indicated in the report of the Federal Structure Committee.

(*a*) The Federal Structure Committee proposed that the representatives of British Indian Provinces in the Upper Chamber should be elected by the Provincial Legislatures by a single transferable vote. Do you agree with this proposal or have you any alternative to suggest ?

(*b*) Do you consider that the franchise qualifications ought to be different for the Federal and Provincial Legislatures ? If so, what do you consider it ought to be in the case of the Federal Legislature ?

(*c*) The majority of members of the Federal Structure Committee considered that election to the Lower Chamber of the Federal Legislature should be by territorial constituencies consisting of qualified voters who would cast their vote directly for the candidates of their choice. Under a scheme of this nature there would be more than a million inhabitants on an average in each constituency. The constituencies would in some cases be of enormous size, especially if communal electorates were introduced. In view of the obvious difficulties which must confront a candidate in canvassing and

maintaining contact with such large constituencies the Committee recommended that the alternatives of direct and indirect elections should be fully explored and suggested that while it might be possible without difficulty to adopt direct election in certain areas some form of indirect election might prove desirable in rural areas.

The Franchise Committee would be glad to have your views on this difficult question. In the event of your favouring some system of direct election it would be very useful if you would indicate the nature of the constituency that you would form having regard to the number of seats which you consider ought to be allotted to your province.

7. Representation of women, labour and depressed classes.

Please add any further suggestions which you desire to make regarding the representation of women, labour and the depressed classes and other interests at present specially represented in the Federal Legislature.

8. General.

It will be of great assistance to the Franchise Committee if you will favour them with any observations on the working of the existing franchise and electoral rules which will throw light on the problems now under consideration. The Committee will of course require information later on many other questions but it is not necessary to deal at present with matters outside the scope of this questionnaire.

It is not the function of the Franchise Committee to consider the maintenance, modification or abolition of the existing system of separate communal electorates, though it is clear that this question must be decided before a final scheme can be drawn up for the composition of the various legislatures and the arrangement of the constituencies upon which they are to be based. His Majesty's Government have instructed the Franchise Committee to proceed, in so far as they may find that the absence of such an assumption may preclude them from arriving at conclusions, on the assumption that separate communal electorates will continue to form a feature of the new constitution. It is hoped, however, that it will be possible to offer answers to the questions asked in this paper, without entering upon a discussion of the communal problem.

Points for local Governments.

(1) The Franchise Committee are anxious to save local Governments unnecessary labour as far as possible. A great deal of information which will be of great value in connection with their inquiries must already be available in reports on the working of the present constitution prepared for the Statutory Commission or for other purposes. In dealing with the questions now raised it will suffice to refer to such reports or to send copies corrected up to date where such a course is found convenient.

(2) The Franchise Committee desire, if possible, during their visit to each provincial headquarters, to spend a day or part of a day in a conveniently situated village, where they would meet typical bodies of villagers and discuss with them questions arising out of this inquiry. The Committee would like to have an opportunity of talking to a group of existing voters, a group of those who would become entitled to a vote if the franchise were extended in the manner considered possible by the local Government, and a group of those to whom the vote could not be granted within the limits of any practicable system of franchise. In the last case, the Committee would like to consider, on the spot, the possibility of adopting some system of group representation. The Committee would be grateful if one or two officers could be deputed to accompany them as interpreters, who are will acquainted with the village selected for a visit or with village life in general.

APPENDIX IV.

List of witnesses examined orally in public session by the Indian Franchise Committee.

Delhi, 4th February, 1932.

1. Mr. A. G. Clow, C.I.E., I.C.S., M.L.A.	Joint Secretary, Government of India, Department of Industries and Labour.

Bihar and Orissa witnesses.

Patna, 11th February, 1932.

2. Mr. M. G. Hallett, C.I.E., I.C.S.	Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa.
3. Mr. W. B. Brett, I.C.S. ..	Finance Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa.
4. Mr. E. R. J. R. Cousins, I.C.S.	Collector of Patna.
5. Miss Das	Bihar and Orissa Council of Women.
6. Mrs. Kamal Kamini Prasad. .	
7. Ram Sarat Kumari	(*Examined in Purdah.*)
8. Mr. A. E. D'Silva, M.L.C. ..	Anglo-Indian.
9. Raja Bahadur Harihar Prasad Narayan Singh, M.L.C.	Bihar Landholders' Association.
10. Babu Vishundeo Narayan Singh, M.L.C.	
11. Rev. Joel Lakra..	Representatives of Aborigines.
12. Mr. Sangram Hembrome, M.L.C.	
13. Mr. Garbett Captain Manki, M.L.C.	
14. Mr. Hassan Jan, M.L.C. ..	Muslim League.
15. Khan Bahadur Saiyid Muhammad Hussain, M.L.C.	President, Mohammedan Association.

12th February, 1932.

16. Kumar Ganganand Sinha ..	Bihar Provincial Hindu Sabha.
17. Mr. R. K. Mukharji	
18. Mr. Biswanath Sahay	
19. Babu Ram Narayan	Depressed Classes.
20. Babu Sridhar Samal	
21. Babu Ram Prasad	Dusadh Community.
22. Mr. K. N. Bhattacharjee ..	Labour.
23. Mr. E. Danby	Bihar Planters.

13th February, 1932.

24. Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha, M.L.C.	*Ex*-Member of Executive Council, Bihar and Orissa.
25. Mr. Ramlal Sinha	Bengalee Settlers' Association.
26. Rai Sahib Mehernath Roy ..	

Bengal witnesses.

Calcutta, 16th February, 1932.

27. Mr. H. R. Wilkinson, C.I.E., I.C.S.	Education Secretary to the Government of Bengal.
28. Mr. A. S. Larkin, I.C.S. ..	District Magistrate, Hooghly.
29. Babu Hriday Ranjan Sen ..	Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector, 24-Parganas.
30. Babu Karali Charan Gangulee	Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector, 24-Parganas.
31. Babu Sudhansu Mohan Mukarjee	Circle Officer, 24-Parganas.
32. Mr. R. N. Gilchrist, I.E.S. ..	Labour Commissioner and Deputy Secretary, Commerce Department, Government of Bengal.
33. Mr. Bhagirath Chandra Dass, M.A., B.L.	Bangiya Jana Sangha.
34. Rai Saheb Panchanan Burma, M.B.E., M.L.C.	
35. Mr. E. C. Benthall, M.L.C. ..	Bengal Chamber of Commerce.
36. Mr. W. H. Thompson	European Association, Calcutta.
37. Mr. H. Carey Morgan	

17th February, 1932.

38. Maulvi Latafat Hossain, M.L.C.	Labour.
39. Mr. Singeswar P. Sha, Secretary, Labour Union, Kankinara.	
40. Mr. P. Gupta, General Secretary, Workers' Union, Kanchrapara, 24-Parganas.	
41. Mr. Aftab Ali, Seamen's Union	
42. Mr. Satish Chandra Sen, Secretary, Press Employees' Association, Calcutta.	
43. Mr. Rasik Lal Biswas	All-Bengal Namasudra Association.
44. Rai Sahib Rebati Mohan Sarkar, M.L.C.	Representatives of the Depressed Classes in the Bengal Legislative Council.
45. Mr. Amulyadhan Roy, M.L.C.	
46. Mr. Lalit Kumar Bal, M.L.C. ..	
47. Mr. Sarat Chandra Bal, M.L.C.	
48. Mr. Jyotish Chander Bhose ..	British Indian Association.
49. The Hon'ble Raja Bijoy Singh Dudhoria of Azimganj.	
50. The Hon'ble Lieut. S. C. Ghose Maulick.	
51. Mr. Amulya Dhone Addy ..	
52. Kumar Swrendra Nath Law, M.L.C.	
53. Mr. Probhanath Singh Roy ..	
54. Mr. Profulla Nath Tagore ..	
55. Kumar Kartick Charan Mullick	
56. Khan Bahadur Maulvi Alimuzzaman Chaudhuri, B.A., M.L.C.	District Board, Faridpur.
57. Mr. A. F. Nurun Nabi, B.L.	
58. Babu Jitendra Lal Banerji, M.L.C.	Bengal Hindu Franchise Advisory Board.
59. Mr. S. C. Mukerjee, M.A., B.L.	Indian Christian Association.
60. Dr. Naresh Chandra Sen Gupta, M.L.C.	
61. Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.	Professor of Indian History, University of Lucknow.

Bengal witnesses—*contd.*

18th February, 1932.

62. Dr. H. W. B. Moreno ..	Anglo-Indian League.
63. Mrs. K. C. De, M.B.E.	
64. Mrs. Kumudini Basu, B.A.	
65. Miss Manorama Bose.	
66. Rai Bahadur Ram Deo Chokhany.	Marwari Association.
67. Mr. Baijnath Bajoria	
68. Babu Gadadhar Bagaria ..	
69. Mr. Jatindranath Banerjee ..	
70. Rai S. C. Mukerjee Bahadur, M.L.C.	*Ex*-Chairman, District Board, Hooghly.
71. Sir W. L. Travers, Kt., C.I.E., O.B.E., M.L.C.	
72. Rai A. C. Banerjee Bahadur	Chairman, Birbhum District Board.
73. Maulvi Nur Ahmed	Chairman, Chittagong Municipality.
74. Mr. J. Ahmed	Chairman, District Board, Chittagong.
75. Maulvi Syed Nausher Ali, M.L.C.	Chairman, District Board, Jessore.

Assam witnesses.

23rd February, 1932.

76. Mr. J. A. Dawson, C.I.E. I.C.S.	Special Officer, Reforms, Government of Assam.
77. Mr. K. Cantlie, I.C.S.	Deputy Commissioner, Sibsagar.
78. Mr. C. S. Mullan, I.C.S. ..	Superintendent of Census, Assam.
79. Mr. F. W. Hockenhull ..	Representative of the Assam Branch of the Indian Tea Association.
80. Mr. Sonadhar Das Senapati ..	Depressed Classes.
81. Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah	Assam Provincial Muslim League.
82. Rai Bahadur Satish Chandra Dutta.	Government Pleader, Sylhet.
83. Rai Sahib Gopika Ballav Goswami.	Assam Provincial Hindu Sabha.
84. Kumar Pramathesh Chandra Barua.	Goalpara Zamindars' Association.
85. Mr. L. A. Roffey	Assam Branch of the European Association.

24th February, 1932.

86. Mrs. A. Rahman.

Madras witnesses.

Madras, 29th February, 1932.

87. Sir Bernard Bourdillon, K.B.E., C.M.G.	Chief Secretary to the Government of Ceylon.
88. Mr. H. P. Kaufmann	Ceylon Civil Service.
89. Mr. C. F. Brackenbury, I.C.S.	Collector, Chittoor.
90. Mr. T. G. Rutherford, C.I.E., I.C.S.	Additional Secretary to the Government of Madras.
91. Mr. A. R. C. Westlake, I.C.S. ..	Collector and District Magistrate, Arcot (South).
92. Rai Bahadur N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, B.A., B.L.	Inspector-General of Panchayats.
93. Mr. J. Sivashanmugam Pillai..	Chingleput District Labour Guild and All-India Adi Dravida Mahajana Sabha.

Madras witnesses—*contd.*

1st March, 1932.		
94.	Mr. F. E. James, M.L.A. ..	The United Planters Association.
95.	Mr. W. O. Wright	The European Association.
96.	Mr. K. Kaye	Madras Chamber of Commerce.
97.	Mr. F. Birley (Chairman) ..	
98.	Mr. H. M. Jagannatham, M.L.C.	All-India Arundhateeya Central Sabha.
99.	Mr. A. Rebeiro	Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association.
100.	Rao Bahadur S. V. Narasimha Rao.	Pleader, Kurnool.
101.	Mr. George Joseph	Indian Christian.
102.	The Kumara Rajah of Venkatagiri.	The Madras Landholders' Association.
103.	Mr. R. Ramakrishna Rao ..	
2nd March, 1932.		
104.	Mr. K. R. Avadhani, B.A., B.L.	The South Indian Railway Employees' Association.
105.	Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao.	
106.	Mr. K. Krishnan, B.A., B.L.	Srignanodava Yogam.
107.	Mr. V. Subbuseshan, M.A.	
108.	Mr. A. Rangaswami Ayyar, B.A., B.L.	Madura-Ramnad Agricultural Association.
3rd March, 1932.		
109.	Mr. C. A. Souter, I.C.S. ..	Commissioner of Labour, Madras.
110.	Mrs. K. Alamelumangathayaramma, M.L.C.	
111.	Mrs. Indrani Balasubrahmanyam.	
112.	Miss Nallamuthu Ammal ..	Indian Women's Conference.
113.	Mrs. Hensman.	
114.	Mrs. M. Lakshmi Ammal ..	Women's Graduates' Union.
115.	Miss L. Devasahayam	
116.	Mr. M. S. Sreshta, M.L.C. ..	Indian Christian (Catholics).
117.	Workmen from the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills (Spokesman—Mr. V. Natesa Chettiar).	Labour.
118.	Workmen on the M. and S. M. Railway (Spokesman—Mr. Kuppuswami).	
119.	Rahmat Unissa Begum ..	Madras Presidency Muslim Ladies' Association. (*Examined in purdah.*)
120.	Nazir Hussain Begum.. ..	
4th March, 1932.		
121.	Khan Bahadur P. Khalifulla.	
122.	Mr. M. S. Kotiswaran ..	Madras Port Trust Workers' Union, Western India Match Factory Workers' Union and Telephone Workers' Union.
123.	Mr. Daniel Thomas, M.L.C. ..	Indian Christian.

Bombay witnesses.

Bombay, 7th March, 1932.

124. Mr. R. G. Gordon, I.C.S. ..	Collector, Magistrate and Political Agent, Surgana, Nasik.
125. Mr. H. F. Knight, I.C.S. ..	District Magistrate, Sholapur.
126. Mr. P. M. Bhagwat	Deccan Merchants' Association.
127. Mr. Lalit	

8th March, 1932.

128. Mr. C. W. A. Turner, C.I.E., I.C.S.	Reforms Officer, Bombay.
129. Mr. Miran Mohammed Shah, M.L.C.	Council Muslim Party.
130. Mr. J. S. Kadri, M.L.C. ..	
131. Mr. Hussain Ali Rahimtullah, M.L.C.	
132. Mr. J. B. Petit	Bombay Millowners' Association.
133. Mr. R. S. Nikaljay	Depressed Class Indian Association.
134. Dr. P. G. Solanki, M.L.C. ..	Bhaiskrit Hitkarni Sabha and Gujerat Depressed Classes Association.
135. Mr. Balu Babaji Palwankar ..	Chambhar Community.

9th March, 1932.

136. Syed Munawar	National Seamen's Union.
137. Mr. J. F. Gennings, Bar-at-Law.	Director of Information and Labour Intelligence.
138. Mr. S. H. Prater, M.L.C. ..	Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association.
139. Mr. V. N. Mutalik	Sardars and Inamdars Central Association.
140. Mr. Desai	
141. Sardar Bhasaheb, M.L.C., Thakore of Kerwada.	
142. Rev. R. S. Modak, M.L.C. ..	Poona Indian Christian Association.
143. Dr. J. A. D'Souza, M.L.C. ..	The Catholic Gymkhana.
144. Raja Bahadur Govindlal Shivlal Motilal. ..	Bombay Presidency Hindu Sabha.
145. Mr. G. K. Devadhar, C.I.E. ..	Servants of India Society.
146. Mr. B. V. Jadhav, M.L.A. ..	Mahratta Educational Conference.
147. Rao Sahib R. V. Vandekar, M.L.C.	

10th March, 1932.

148. Mrs. J. R. Doctor	Bombay Presidency Women's Council.
149. Miss G. J. Bahadurji, M.A. ..	Women's Indian Association.
150. Mrs. Hamid Ali	All-India Women's Conference.
151. Dr. (Mrs.) Sukthankar ..	
152. Mr. H. K. Kirpalani, I.C.S. ..	Municipal Commissioner, Bombay City.

11th March, 1932.

153. Mr. G. L. Winterbotham, M.L.A.	Chamber of Commerce.
154. Mr. C. P. Bramble	European Association.
155. Mr. J. D. Boyle	
156. Mr. R. C. Thomas	
157. Mr. H. L. Chablani, M.A. ..	Professor, Delhi University.

Witnesses from the Central Provinces.

14th March, 1932.

158. Mr. E. Gordon, C.I.E., I.C.S.	Commissioner, Chhattisgarh Division.
159. Mr. C. M. Trivedi, O.B.E., I.C.S.	Deputy Commissioner, Buldana.
160. Mr. C. J. W. Lillie, I.C.S. ..	Officer on Special Duty, Reforms.
161. Mr. W. H. Shoobert, I.C.S. ..	Census Superintendent, Central Provinces.
162. Rai Bahadur K. S. Nayudu, M.L.C.	Non-Brahmin.

15th March, 1932.

163. Mr. S. M. Rahman, M.L.C. ..	Berar Muslims.
164. Mr. M. Y. Sharif, Bar-at-Law, M.L.C.	Central Provinces Muslims, Nagpur.
165. Sir M. V. Joshi, K.C.I.E. ..	*Ex*-member of Executive Council.
166. Rao Bahadur N. K. Kelkar, M.L.C.	President, Co-operative Bank, Balaghat, Berar.
167. Mr. B. G. Khaparde, M.L.C.	
168. Mr. R. M. Deshmukh.	
169. Mr. B. G. Kane	Indian Christians.
170. Mr. C. D. Madura	
171. Mr. G. M. Thaware	All-India Depressed Classes Association, Nagpur.
172. Mrs. S. B. Tambe, M.L.C. ..	Member, Provincial Franchise Committee.
173. Mr. R. W. Fulay, M.L.C. ..	Labour.

16th March, 1932.

174. Maulana Shaukat Ali	Central Khilafat Committee.

Witnesses from the United Provinces.

Lucknow, 19th March, 1932.

175. Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan, M.L.C.	Muslim Members of Legislative Council.
176. Khan Bahadur Maulvi Muhammad Fazl-ur-Rahman Khan, M.L.C.	
177. Mr. J. H. Darwin, I.C.S. ..	Collector, Agra.
178. Mr. Panna Lal, I.C.S. ..	Collector, Budaun.
179. Dr. S. S. Nehru, I.C.S. ..	Reforms Officer, United Provinces Government.
180. Mr. Ishrat Hussain	Deputy Collector, Saharanpur.
181. Mr. Sheokaran Nath Misra ..	Deputy Collector, Fyzabad.
182. Mrs. Menon	All-India Women's Conference.
183. Begum Habibullah	
184. Miss Vincent	
185. Mrs. Shukla	
186. Mrs. J. Gupta	Lucknow Women's Association.
187. Mr. B. N. Sharga	The United Provinces Dharma Rakshani Sabha.

20th March, 1932.

188. Mr. T. Gavin Jones, M.L.A. ..	European Association, Cawnpore.
189. Mr. J. G. Ryan, M.B.E., V.D.	Upper India Chamber of Commerce, Cawnpore.

Witnesses from the United Provinces.—*contd.*

20th March, 1932.

190. Rai Sahib M. Das	The B. & N. W. Railwaymen's Association.
191. The Hon'ble Raja Sir Rampal Singh.	The British Indian Association of Oudh.
192. Major D. R. Ranjit Singh ..	Agra Province Zamindars Association, Allahabad.
193. Lala Hari Raj Saroop, M.L.A.	The United Provinces Zamindars Association, Allahabad.
194. Mr. P. N. Sapru	The United Provinces Liberal Association, Allahabad.
195. Mr. Ram Das Jiwit	The Dalit Jat Sudharak Sabha.
196. Mr. Gauri Shankar Pal ..	The United Provinces Hindu Backward Classes League.

21st March, 1932.

197. Mr. Baldev Prasad Jeaswar ..	The United Provinces Adi-Hindu Depressed Classes Association.
198. Mr. O. M. Chiene	Anglo-Indian Association, Allahabad.
199. Mr. S. R. Sharma	
200. Khan Bahadur Masudul Hassan, Bar-at-Law.	Judicial Minister, Rampur State.
201. Rai Bahadur Babu Vikrama Jit Singh.	The United Provinces Chamber of Commerce.
202. Mr. B. N. Chopra	
203. Mr. J. L. Sathe, I.C.S. ..	Director of Industries, United Provinces.

Witnesses at Delhi.

Delhi, 23rd March, 1932.

204. Mr. G. Mackworth Young, C.I.E., I.C.S.	Secretary to the Government of India, Army Department.
205. Dr. J. H. Hutton, D.Sc., I.C.S.	Census Commissioner for India.
206. Mr. N. M. Joshi, M.L.A.	
207. Rev. J. C. Chatterjee	Delhi Municipal Committee.
208. Lala Shri Ram	
209. Rai Bahadur Sohan Lal ..	
210. Haji Rashid Ahmad	
211. Khan Sahib S. M. Abdullah ..	
212. Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji ..	All-India Women's Conference.

30th March, 1932.

213. Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah, M.L.A.	All-India Depressed Classes Association.
214. Mr. G. A. Gavai, M.L.C. ..	
215. Rao Sahib L. C. Guruswami ..	
216. Mr. Bohre Khem Chand, President, All-India Shri Jatava Mahasabha, Agra.	
217. Mr. J. Mandal, M.A., B.L., President, Bengal Namasudra Franchise Board.	
218. Mr. S. G. Naik, M.L.C. ..	
219. Mr. S. U. Kotangle	

Witnesses at Delhi—*contd.*

30th March, 1932.

220. Mr. P. N. Rajabhaj, President, Provincial All-India Depressed Classes Association, Poona.	All-India Depressed Classes Association.
221. Mr. H. J. Khandekar, General Secretary, Central Provinces Mahar Youth League.	
222. Mr. Virratna Devi Das, Secretary, All-India Jati Sudhar Mahasabha.	
223. Mr. Janki Das, Vice-President	
224. Dr. Ram Prashad	
225. Mr. Ishar Das	
226. Mr. K. S. Kane	
227. Mirza Ejaz Husain	All-India Muslim League.
228. Lt.-Col. Sir Henry Gidney, Kt., M.L.A.	Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, All-India and Burma.
229. Mr. C. H. F. Pereira	
230. Raja Sir Vasudeva Rajah of Kollengode, Kt., C.I.E., M.L.A.	Landholders and Zamindars group of the Legislative Assembly.
231. Sardar Sohan Singh, M.L.A. ..	
232. Mr. K. P. Thamban, M.L.A. ..	
233. Sardar G. N. Majumdar, M.L.A.	
234. Nawab Naharsing Iswar Singh, M.L.A.	
235. Mr. Bhupat Singh, M.L.A. ..	
236. Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury, M.L.A.	
237. Kunwar Raghubir Singh, M.L.A.	
238. Swami Acchutanand	All-India Depressed Classes Association.
239. Mr. Baldeo Prasad Jaiswar ..	
240. The Hon'ble Sir David Devadoss.	Indian Christians.
241. Dr. F. X. DeSouza, M.L.A. ..	
242. Dr. Zia-ud-Din Ahmed, C.I.E., M.L.A.	Secretary, Muslim Group of the Central Legislature.
243. Rai Saheb Omkar Prasad ..	All-India Cantonments' Association.
244. Rao Bahadur Panna Lal ..	
245. Lala Chiranji Lal	

Punjab witnesses.

Lahore, 31st March, 1932.

246. Mr. E. M. Jenkins, I.C.S. ..	Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar.
247. Mr. J. E. Keough, P.C.S. ..	Deputy Commissioner, Lyallpur.
248. Khan Sahib Sheik Fazl Elahi, P.C.S.	Joint Secretary to the Government of the Punjab (Transferred Department).

1st April, 1932.

249. Lala Ram Dass, B.A., B.T. (Secretary).	Dayanand Dalit Uddhar Mandal (Punjab), Hoshiarpur.
250. Swami Shudra Nath	
251. Pandit Guru Dutt	

Punjab witnesses.—*contd.*

Lahore, 1st April, 1932.

252. Lala Roshan Lal (President)	Dayanand Dalit Oddhar Sabha.
253. Pandit Gian Chand (Secretary)	
254. Mr. Mangu Ram (President) ..	Ad-Dharm Mandal.
255. Mr. Hazara Ram (General Secretary).	
256. Mr. Hans Raj	
257. Pandit Hari Ram (Vice-President, Ad-Dharam Mandal, Jullundur).	
258. Mr. Sant Ram Azad	
259. Mr. Ram Chand, Editor of the *Adi-Dinka*, Jullundur City.	"
260. Mr. Harditta Mall, President Mazbi of District Ferozepur.	
261. Bhagat Gulaba Mall	
262. Mr. Roshan Lal Balmeki ..	
263. Mr. Shriman Bihari Lal ..	
264. Resi Ram Khalsa Bros. ..	
265. S. Ram Singh Kabir Phanthi	
266. Mahatma Maya Singh Khalsa Bros.	
267. Mr. Shulla Ram	
268. Mr. Chaman Ram Rawdassia	
269. Mr. Kharku Mal	
270. Mr. Uttam Chand	
271. Mr. Hardiyal	
272. Mr. M. A. Ghani, M.L.C. ..	Labour.
273. Dr. Nand Singh (President) ..	Ramgarhia Central Federation.
274. Professor Jodh Singh, M.A. ..	Sikh Community.
275. Sardar Sampuran Singh, M.L.C.	
276. Sardar Harnam Singh.. ..	
277. Sardar Shiv Dev. Singh ..	
278. Sardar Jawahir Singh, M.L.C.	
279. Mr. Ram Lal	Registrar of Trade Unions.
280. Mr. W. H. Abel	Inspector of Factories.

4th April, 1932.

281. Dr. (Mrs.) Shave	Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, Punjab.
282. Mr. B. L. Rallia Ram ..	The Punjab Indian Christian Conference and the All-India Conference of Indian Christians.
283. Mr. K. L. Rallia Ram ..	
284. Mr. F. D. Warris	
285. Rev. K. N. Dina Nath ..	
286. Mr. J. C. Ghosh	
287. Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur ..	All-India Women's Conference.
288. Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade	
289. Mrs. Miles Irving	
290. Lady Abdul Qadir	
291. Mrs. Bhola Nath	
292. Khan Bahadur Nawab Mohammad Jamal Khan.	Baluchi Tumandars.
293. Mr. L. R. Sahni	Northern India Chamber of Commerce.

Punjab witnesses.—*contd.*

4th April, 1932.

294. Mr. W. R. Taylor	Punjab Chamber of Commerce.
295. Rai Bahadur P. Mukerjee, M.L.C.	
296. Mr. P. S. Sodhbans	Indian Chamber of Commerce (Desi Beopar Mandal).
297. Lala Harkishen Lal	
298. Lala Jagan Nath Agarwal, M.A., LL.B., M.L.A., Advocate.	Chairman High Court Association, Lahore.
299. Major D. Vanrenen	Punjab Zamindar's Association.

5th April, 1932.

300. Mian Mushtaq Ahmed, M.L.C.	Muslim Representatives in the Legislative Council.
301. Syed Mubarak Ali Shah, M.L.C.	
302. Khan Bahadur Mian Ahmed Yar Khan Daultana, M.L.C.	
303. Pandit Nanak Chand, M.L.C...	Member, Provincial Franchise Committee.

Witnesses from the North-West Frontier Province.

Peshawar, 6th April, 1932.

304. Khan Bahadur Nawab Muzaffar Khan, C.I.E.	Reforms Officer, North-West Frontier Province.
305. Mrs. Kamal-ud-din.	
306. Qazi Mohammad Sahafiq ..	Vakil, Charsadda.
307. Sardar Narinjan Singh Bedi	President, Sikh Sudhar Committee, Peshawar.
308. Mr. Mohammad Sarwar Khan Tarkhaeli.	Editor-in-Chief, *Naujawan-Afghan.*
309. Nawab Hafiz Saifullah Khan	President, Muslim Representative Committee, Dera Ismail Khan.

7th April, 1932.

310. Mr. O. K. Caroe, C.I.E., I.C.S.	Deputy Commissioner, Peshawar.
311. Mr. L. W. H. D. Best, O.B.E., M.C., I.C.S.	Deputy Commissioner, Kohat.

APPENDIX V.—POLLING METHODS.

The present system.—As a result of our enquiries we are satisfied that many of the polling arrangements in use in various provinces in British India are unduly elaborate and overcautious. There is no uniformity in polling arrangements and technique and there is a good deal of wastage of polling capacity. There is no uniform basis for the qualifications and grades of officers who are considered competent and who may be made available as presiding and polling officers. One of the provinces mans a polling station with one presiding officer and one clerk, while another province finds it necessary to employ one presiding officer and four or more clerks to poll the same number or even less. One province fixes the polling capacity at one station at less than 300 electors while others place it at a thousand or even more. In one province there is no secrecy of the ballot under the present system even in the case of literate voters, and in another the practice is that the presiding officer marks the ballot paper of illiterate voters in the presence of the candidates or their polling agents, who can hear the voter's request and watch the actual marking of the ballot paper; another province insists that the marking should be done in the presence of the presiding officer alone. One province takes the thumb impression or signature of every voter on the counterfoil of the ballot papers while other provinces observe less formal modes of identification. The form of the ballot paper, the mode of its issue and the preliminaries thereto differ widely from province to province. One province uses the coloured box system which renders it unnecessary for any cross or mark to be made on the ballot paper. Another requires a cross to be made on a ballot paper having symbols allotted to each candidate. In another province the ballot paper has the names of the candidates printed in different colours.

Our proposals.—We realise the difficulty of the immediate introduction of a universal system in a country of the size of a continent and are conscious of the diversities of administrative system and organisation with the varying densities of population in different provinces; we also recognise that the number of competent presiding and polling officers is not unlimited. But we are convinced that there is scope for greater uniformity in polling practice and that it is possible to have a simplified polling system in use throughout British India. We are recommending a large increase in the number of enfranchised persons and in our view this is the appropriate time at which to introduce modifications in the existing polling systems. In framing the details of our scheme we have had regard to the following essentials :—

(1) that the system must be simple and easily understood by the least educated and even by the illiterate;
(2) that it must be capable of speed in operation;
(3) that the greatest possible degree of secrecy of the ballot must be ensured;
(4) that the possibilities of personation or malpractice of any kind should be minimised as far as possible;
(5) that the system must be capable of expansion or modification according to local needs.

The coloured box or symbol system.—The system we recommend is the coloured box or symbol system, which is in use in Ceylon and has also been tried successfully in India. In the polling compartment, boxes bearing distinctive colours or symbols are placed, one box being provided for each candidate. The colour or symbol assigned to each candidate is fixed some days before the polling takes place, and the voters have no difficulty in ascertaining the colour or symbol assigned to the candidate for whom they desire to vote. The voter makes no mark on his ballot paper, but merely drops it into the box of the candidate of his choice.

Experience shows that the number of voters who are colour-blind and unable to distinguish the colours on the boxes is very small, but when such persons appear they must be assisted by the presiding officer to place their ballot papers in the proper box, just as illiterate voters are helped by the presiding officer to mark their ballot papers at present. Care should be taken to select well lighted rooms for polling purposes. If the number of candidates exceeds the number of easily distinguishable colours available, a clearly marked and distinctive symbol (e.g., a tree, an umbrella, a tiger, a bicycle, an elephant, etc.), may be assigned to each candidate. The local Governments may, if they think it desirable, draw up schedules of colours and/or symbols.

Allocation of colours or symbols.—At the time of the delivery of the nomination papers to the returning officer every candidate should select his colour or symbol or both as the case may be; and on the day fixed for the scrutiny of nomination papers the returning officer should see that the colour or symbol or both are suitable and that they do not conflict with those in use by other candidates. In case they do conflict, the returning officer should in conformity as far as possible with the wishes of the candidates select and allocate the colour or/and symbol, but in any case his decision must be final. The returning officer should see that no colour or symbol is likely to offend the religious susceptibilities of any community or to mislead the electorate.

The polling station and staff.—Wherever possible, the polling station should be located in a public building, a school or similar permanent structure. In some provinces, we found police stations being used for the purpose, but we think that this practice should be avoided wherever possible. In some instances it may be necessary to erect temporary structures. In any event the polling station should be so arranged that the voters on entering can conveniently approach first the table or tables at which sit the poll clerks and then proceed past the presiding officer and through the polling compartment and out of the station without interfering with the ingress of other voters.

The presiding officer's table should be so placed that he can supervise the poll clerks and at the same time can keep a watch on the polling compartment and see that the voters do not loiter there unnecessarily or resort to any malpractices. The polling compartment containing the ballot boxes should normally consist of a passage or corridor made by the erection of one or more partitions of such a width as to enable voters to pass through conveniently and in turn.

Notices indicating the colours or symbols allotted to the various candidates should be posted up prominently both outside and inside the station.

It will be necessary to provide the appropriate number of ballot boxes at each station. The colours or symbols allotted should be printed and pasted on the ballot boxes.

The smallest polling unit should consist of one presiding officer and two clerks; one clerk should be in charge of the electoral roll and the other of the ballot papers.

In our view 1,000 registered electors may normally be allotted to each pair of poll clerks. When the number of registered electors to be dealt with at any one station exceeds 1,000, the electoral roll or register should be divided up and an additional pair of poll clerks provided for each such further thousand registered electors or part thereof. If it be found that there are rush hours, it may be advisable to engage additional clerks during those periods. Where the polling station has a large number of electors allotted to it and hence a large number of clerks, an assistant presiding officer may be required.

It will usually be found desirable to have two police constables or chaukidars inside the polling station, one to regulate the inflow of electors and the other to act as a relief and under the orders of the presiding officer to expedite and regulate the passage of electors through the actual voting compartments.

Reference is made in Chapter VIII to the special polling station arrangements necessary for women voters.

Form of ballot paper.—The ballot paper should be printed with a counterfoil in the form set out below, with perforations between the ballot paper and counterfoil to enable the former to be easily detached :—

Form of ballot paper.

Serial No.———	Serial No.———
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ELECTION, 1933.	LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ELECTION, 1933.
Constituency———————	Constituency———————————
Polling Station———————	
Elector's No.———————	

The ballot paper should have printed on it the name of the province, the name of the constituency and the serial number and the words " Polling Station " and " Elector's No." All polling stations should have a number allotted to them which should also be printed.

Identification.—The simplest mode of identification is to arrange for the presence of the patwari or village officer or a member of the panchayat or union board. He should sit in close proximity to the poll clerks and should assist the clerk having charge of the electoral roll in identifying the voters, calling the attention of the clerk to any case of impersonation or misrepresentation when the matter should at once be referred to the presiding officer. The village officer will also be of assistance to the presiding officer in dealing with a challenged vote. Opinions differ as to the necessity of taking the voter's signature or thumb impression on the counterfoil of the ballot paper, but we leave it to the discretion of local Governments to determine whether they think the practice useful, if only as a deterrent against malpractices. Special difficulties occur in the identification of women voters, especially where they observe *purdah*, and ordinarily it is best to place the responsibility for the identification on the husband, other relative, or neighbour who accompanies the woman to the poll and is in his or her turn capable of identification.

The poll.—The voter should first approach the clerk in charge of the electoral roll. The clerk should ascertain the elector's name, his or her father's name and address or such other particulars as appear on the roll and having checked these with the roll, call out the number, name and description of the voter as printed. The clerk will then place against the number of the voter in the roll a short horizontal line to denote that the voter has received a paper. No other mark should be made in the roll.

On the voter's number being called out, the clerk in charge of the ballot paper will enter the number of the elector, and, where not printed, the distinctive letter or number of the polling station on the counterfoil of the ballot paper. He will then detach the ballot paper from the counterfoil

and stamp the ballot paper with the official mark (preferably from a percussion stamp) and deliver the ballot paper to the voter. The voter should then be directed to the polling compartment, showing the official mark on his ballot paper to the presiding officer. In the polling compartment there should be as many separate ballot boxes as there are candidates. Each box will have the appropriate colour or symbol or both pasted thereon, and the voter will drop his ballot paper into the box of the candidate for whom he desires to vote, as indicated by the colour or symbol or both and will forthwith quit the station.

Polling hours.—We recommend that normally the polling hours should not be less than nine in all.

General observations.—The advantage of the system proposed is that the voter need not be literate and that it is not necessary for the voter to mark the ballot paper. He has merely to go in and drop the ballot paper in the box having the colour or symbol allotted to the candidate of his choice. The presiding officer will merely be required to supervise the polling operations. The main part of the work including the distribution of the ballot papers will be done by the clerical staff under the supervision of the presiding officer and it will normally be only when a voter is challenged that the presiding officer will have to intervene. Amongst other advantages, the system we advocate should enable local Governments to have a wider choice of individuals from whom to select and appoint as presiding officers and should enable use to be made of a larger number of non-officials. If it is found more convenient the clerk in charge of the electoral roll may note the voter's number on a small slip and may hand over the slip to the voter and the voter shall in such a case hand the slip to the ballot clerk who issues the ballot paper and he will destroy it forthwith. It would be possible under this system if necessary to finish the elections in Muslim, Non-Muslim, or other constituencies in the same area for both the provincial councils and the federal legislature on one and the same occasion by providing as many boxes as there are candidates, if necessary, in different compartments side by side. The chances of personation will also be minimised as the name and address of the voter will be ascertained in the presence of village officers. It may be noted that in Ceylon 50,000 placards giving simple instructions to the public were published all over the country a month or so before the polling. These placards proved very useful in educating voters in the method of voting, the necessity for secrecy of the ballot, and the penalties for malpractice and personation.

APPENDIX VI.

Expenditure on Elections.

Introductory.

1. While considerations of expenditure cannot be the dominant factor in reaching a decision on the basis of the franchise, their importance is obvious and we have throughout borne them in our mind in our investigations and in making our proposals. In the case of most local Governments, we made specific enquiries as to the cost of elections at the present day and the estimated cost of elections on the basis of their own franchise proposals. We append a note briefly recording the information we have obtained.

Cost to Provincial Governments under the existing franchise.

2. It was only to be expected that the first elections held under the reformed constitution should have been markedly costly, since they involved the preparation for the first time of an electoral roll which included almost three per cent. of the total population of British India, and administrative and police arrangements for the polling of an electorate of this size. As will be seen from the figures shown in the tabular statement which follows, it has been the experience of most local Governments that a substantial and progressive reduction in cost has taken place since 1920. Periodical general revisions of the electoral roll, with consequent expenditure on printing, are to some extent responsible for the fluctuations which may be noted in the returns of certain administrations. Printing however, remains one of the principal items in the election budgets of local Governments, and the Government of the Central Provinces, which estimates the cost of an election on the present basis at Rs. 60,000, states that two-thirds of that amount is spent on printing, and that no substantial reduction in the proportion is probable under the new franchise now proposed.

Table showing cost to local Governments of elections to the provincial legislative councils under the existing franchise.

	1920	1923	1926	1929-30
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Madras	2,84,773	81,007	1,47,470	1,00,000†
Bombay	5,00,000	1,45,000	1,60,000	1,29,000
Bengal	3,50,000	2,38,000	1,90,000	1,78,000
United Provinces	Say * 5,50,000	Say * 2,00,000	Say * 4,00,000	Say— 4,50,000
Punjab	4,75,000	2,65,000	2,58,000	1,88,000
Bihar and Orissa	1,50,000	1,25,000	1,14,180	91,729
Central Provinces	—	—	60,000	Say— 60,000
Assam	—	—	41,745	55,165

* These figures are not exhaustive and do not include expenditure met from the contingent grant of district officers on items such as the transport of ballot papers and ballot boxes, the construction of temporary polling booths for polling stations, or the travelling allowance of the various subordinate officials employed in connection with elections.

† Of which Rs. 70,000 was spent in the preparation of the electoral rolls.

Probable cost to Local Governments of an election on the basis proposed by the Indian Franchise Committee.

4. It is obvious that an increase in the size of the electorate from an average of three per cent. to an average of fourteen per cent. of the population of British India must necessarily involve a substantial increase in the cost of elections to the provincial Governments concerned, and we have given full weight to this factor in framing our final proposals. The fact that, for the reasons given in chapters III and IV of our Report, we have decided in favour of an extension of the existing direct vote in preference to any system of indirect election will sensibly diminish expenditure, for the organisation of a group system could not but have been costly, police expenditure must inevitably have been much heavier than under the system now proposed, and the time and expense involved in the preparation and maintenance of a primary roll covering the whole adult population of British India must have been considerable. The system actually recommended by us will admit of being established by the expansion of the existing machinery ; the simplified election procedure which we recommend will if adopted result in economies of some importance, and, while the first election on the new basis must inevitably, as in 1920, be costly, we believe that as in the case of the elections subsequent to 1920, a progressive reduction in expenditure may be looked for in the case of subsequent elections. Certain further economies may be secured if action on the lines suggested in paragraph 7 below is found practicable by local governments. If it is possible that elections should be held on the same day, or on two days for Moslems and non-Moslems respectively, expenditure on the travelling allowance of election staff will, *inter alia*, be reduced. Such expenditure must of course be proportionately heavier in provinces such as Assam and the Central Provinces where distances are greater, and the local Governments contemplate that the period of elections must be longer and that the staff will have to journey from one district to another.

5. We place on record the views expressed by those local Governments of whom specific enquiries were made as to the probable cost of an election on the new basis. Their estimates are naturally approximate only, but they will be of assistance in forming an opinion as to the general increase in expenditure which may be looked for.

The Government of the *United Provinces* are of opinion that a simplified election procedure such as we propose would be likely to produce a saving in certain items and an additional expenditure on others. The abolition of the signature slips at present used for identification purposes will produce a saving, while the introduction of the coloured box system will result in a certain reduction in the personnel required. On the other hand a certain initial outlay on the installation of coloured boxes and their transport will be necessary, particularly where there are multi-member constituencies.

Taking into account these and similar considerations (to which we have given full weight in our final recommendations regarding the simplification of polling methods) the Government of the United Provinces estimate that the enfranchisement of 10 per cent. of the population will cost Rs. 10 lakhs, that of 12½ per cent. Rs. 12 lakhs, and that of 15 per cent. Rs. 14 lakhs. Their final proposals, which we have for practical purposes accepted, contemplate the enfranchisement of some 15½ per cent. of the population.

A general estimate given to us in the Punjab was that the approximate cost of an election might be taken at Rs. 30,000 for every 100,000 voters. On our proposals, the new electorate in this province will consist of roughly 2,800,000 voters, and the cost would be approximately Rs. 850,000 as compared with a present cost of Rs. 188,000.

The Government of the Central Provinces estimate tentatively that a general election on the basis of their final proposals would probably cost some Rs. 350,000, of which some Rs. 300,000 would be spent on printing, as against a present cost of Rs. 60,000, of which Rs. 42,000 is in respect of printing and Rs. 18,000 in respect of allowances for time and travelling allowances of the election staff (an item which they think unlikely to rise in the same proportion as the cost of printing).

6. The estimates given above, while necessarily provisional and incomplete, give some indication of the probable cost of our proposals. The general impression left is that an average of Rs. 20,000 to 25,000 per 100,000 registered electors, descending, as in the United Provinces, in progression with the size of the electorate, might be a not unreasonable approximation. On this basis, assuming a total electorate of some 36 millions, and assuming, as may, we think, safely be done, that not more than two-thirds on an average will poll in the first election under the new constitution, and that polling arrangements are made on this basis, the approximate cost to provincial Governments of a general election would be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 50 lakhs to Rs. 60 lakhs (say £375,000 to £450,000).

7. One of the principal items of expenditure in the case of the first election under the new constitution will be the preparation of the electoral roll, and, while it may be hoped that a progressive reduction in expenditure under this head will follow, the revision of a roll of the size contemplated must inevitably in any circumstances be costly. We note, indeed, that the Government of Bombay are of opinion that " with the increase in the electorate, and the probable increase in the duration of the council from three to five years, this work will become unmanageable within a short time, and it will become necessary to devise some machinery for continuously revising and maintaining the rolls up to date." In view of the relatively backward state of political development of certain sections of the electorate now proposed, we do not consider that a statutory obligation should be imposed on voters to furnish the information necessary for the preparation of the electoral roll. But it is, we think, clear that much trouble and expense could be saved to the administration were it possible to make use of the assistance of non-official agency in the matter. In Bengal, for example, the presidents of union boards might do useful work in this connection.

The cost of elections to candidates.

8. We now turn to the question of the cost of elections to candidates for the provincial legislatures. Under a series of Acts (which cover elections for the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly as well as for the Provincial Legislatures) penalties have been laid down for bribery and corruption, and a return of election expenses prescribed. No maximum has, however, as yet been prescribed for the expenses of candidates.

9. The returns of expenditure made in the various provinces afford a basis, though an uncertain basis, for an estimate of the cost of an election in ordinary circumstances. The estimate must necessarily be uncertain, since there appears to be general unanimity that the returns of expenditure submitted under the various Acts in many cases fail to correspond precisely with the total expenses of candidates. In Madras the average expenditure returned rose from Rs. 1,000 in 1920 to Rs. 3,000 in 1923 and 1926 (Rs. 2,500 only in rural constituencies), but in 1926 the highest figures for urban and rural seats respectively were Rs. 5,100 and Rs. 25,600. In the Punjab the increase over the same period was from Rs. 498 to Rs. 1,387, while the Government of Bengal informed the Statutory Commission that the amount

spent by a candidate of average status who seriously contested a general constituency might be estimated at from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 5,000 according to the size and nature of the constituency.

10. The general impression left by the material at our disposal is that there has been a marked and progressive increase in the expenditure incurred by candidates since the election of 1920.

It seems not unlikely that competition will lead to a mutual agreement to lower the scale through sheer inability to maintain it. There are other expenses which we cannot recognise officially which cause an extra, and sometimes unnecessary, drain on the candidate's purse. Finally, printing tends to become an increasing burden.

11. While, however, we feel confident that the development of political parties and of an informed public opinion will result in a reduction of the expenditure of candidates, we definitely recommend the imposition of a statutory limitation (in fixing which weight would, of course, be given to the difference between urban and rural conditions) on such expenditure, once experience of the working of the first election under the new franchise is available ; together with insistence on a rigorous return of expenses. Action on these lines would, in our view, go far to assist the candidate, and to help in the formation of the healthy public opinion in matters such as the present which is the best safeguard against abuse and extravagance.

12. Democracy is expensive not only to Government, but to those who seek election to the legislatures. If we take the total number of seats under the new constitution at 2,000, and the average combined expenditure per seat at Rs. 5,000 for the successful and the unsuccessful candidates, the total cost of a general election to parties and candidates will be about Rs. 1 crore—say £750,000.

APPENDIX VII.

Existing qualifications for Provincial Legislative Councils.

"GENERAL" CONSTITUENCIES.

[Muhammadan, Urban and Rural;
Non-Muhammadan, Urban and Rural;
European and (where they exist) Sikh;
Indian Christian and Anglo-Indian.]

Apart from the qualification of race or religion, the qualification required in all these constituencies is (subject to a minimum age of 21 years, which applies also to voters in special constituencies) either assessment to income-tax (i.e., possession of an annual income of Rs. 2,000 or more) *or*, being a retired, pensioned or discharged officer or soldier of the Indian Army, *or else* one or another of the qualifications shown in the following table:—

Madras.	Bombay.	Bengal.	United Provinces.
(i) Payment of Rs. 3 a year in municipal taxation; or	(i) Ownership or occupation of land assessed at Rs. 32 land revenue (Rs. 16 in certain districts).	(i) Payment of Rs. 1¼ a year in municipal taxes (Rs. 3 in one town); or	(i) Ownership or tenancy of building of rental value of Rs. 36 a year; or
(ii) Holding of land of annual rental value of Rs. 10; or	*In Bombay City and other urban areas.*	(ii) Payment of union rates of Rs. 2 or more.	(ii) Payment of municipal tax on income of Rs. 200 a year; or
In Madras City.	(i) Ownership or occupation of building of annual rental value of Rs. 120 in Bombay, Rs. 60 in Karachi, and Rs. 36 elsewhere.	(iii) Payment of Re. 1 a year as road cess or Rs. 2 chowkidari tax; or	(iii) Ownership of land paying Rs. 25 a year land revenue.
(iii) Payment of property tax, company tax or profession tax; of Rs. 3 or over.		*In Calcutta.*	(iv) Tenant (other than sub-tenant) paying rent of Rs. 50 or over.
(iv) Occupation of a house of annual rental value of Rs. 60.		(iv) Ownership and occupancy of land or building assessed at Rs. 150 a year; or	
		(v) Ownership or occupancy of land or building assessed at Rs. 300; or	
		(vi) Payment of Rs. 24 a year as corporation taxes.	

Punjab.	Bihar and Orissa.	Central Provinces.	Assam.
(i) Ownership or tenancy of land of annual rental value of Rs. 96 ; or (ii) Payment of Rs. 50 municipal taxes ; or (iii) Ownership or occupancy of tenancy land paying land revenue of Rs. 25 ; or (iv) Tenancy of Crown land rented at Rs.25 a year ; or (v) Being a village officer or headman (zaildar, inamdar or sufedposh).	(i) Payment of Rs. 3 a year in municipal taxation ; or (ii) Holding of an estate paying Rs.12 a year local cesses ; or (iii) Tenure of land assessed for purposes of local cess of Rs. 100 or more. (iv) Holding of a raiyati tenure rented at Rs. 16, 24, 48 or 64 according to locality.	(i) Ownership or tenancy of house or building of annual rental value of Rs. 36 ; or (ii) Assessment of income at Rs. 200 for municipal taxes ; or (iii) Ownership of estate paying Rs. 100 land revenue ; or (iv) Holding of agricultural land of which the annual land revenue or rent is Rs. 30, 40 or 50 according to district. (v) Lambardar. *Berar.* (i) Patel, Patwari or Deshmukh, Deshponde. (ii) Local cess or school rate assessed on income from non - agricultural sources of Rs. 500. (iii) As for Central Provinces.	(i) Payment of Rs. 3 municipal taxes (Rs. 2 or Rs. 1½ in two towns) ; or (ii) Payment of Re. 1 a year as union or chowkidari tax ; or (iii) Ownership of land with land revenue of Rs. 15 a year ; or (iv) Liability to local rate of Re. 1 a year (in three districts).

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